HEGEL AND HEIDEGGER ON NATURE AND WORLD

Raoni Padui

Hegel and Heidegger on Nature and World

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Finally, I would like to thank Diana Bull, who has questioned me and challenged me more than any philosophical work, and who over many years has been the solid foundation upon which I can always rely.

Abbreviations

G. W. F. HEGEL

AL	*Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art: Volume I.* Translated by T. M. Knox. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
DFS	*The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy.* Translated by H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf. Albany: SUNY Press, 1977.
DS	*Differenz des Fichteschen und Schllingschen Systems der Philosophie.* Werke 2, 7–138 (often known simply as the *Differenzschrift*).
EL	*Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline: Part I: Science of Logic.* Translated by Klaus Brinkmann and Daniel O. Dahlstrom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
EnL	*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse. Erster Teil. Die Wissenschaft der Logik.* Werke 8.
FK	*Faith and Knowledge*. Translated by Walter Cerf and H. S. Harris. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
GW	*Glauben und Wissen oder Reflexionsphilosophie der Subjektivität in der Vollständigkeit ihrer Formen als Kantische, Jacobische und Fichtesche Philosophie*. Werke 2, 287–433.
IPH	*Introduction to the Philosophy of History*. Translated by Leo Rauch. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988.
NP	*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse. Zweiter Teil: Die Naturphilosophie.* Werke 9.
PG	*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse. Dritter Teil. Die Philosophie des Geistes.* Werke 10.
PhG	*Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Werke 3.
PhS	*Phenomenology of Spirit*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

PM	*Philosophy of Mind. Part Three of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences.* Translated by William Wallace and A. V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
PN	*Philosophy of Nature: Being Part Two of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
SL	*Science of Logic*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Amherst: Humanity Books, 1998.
VA	*Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik I.* Werke 13.
VPG	*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte.* Werke 12.
Werke	*Werke in Zwanzig Bänden*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1969-.
WLI	*Wissenschaft der Logik I*. Werke 5.
WLII	*Wissenschaft der Logik II*. Werke 6.

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

BF	*Bremen and Freiburg Lectures: Insight into That Which is and Basic Principles of Thinking.* Translated by Andrew J. Mitchell. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.
BFV	*Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge.* GA 79.
BPP	*Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.
BT	*Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
BW	*Basic Writings.* Edited by David Farrell Krell. Harper: San Francisco, 1993.
BzP	*Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*. GA 65.
CP	*Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*. Translated by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
CPC	*Country Path Conversations*. Translated by Bret W. Davis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.
DT	*Discourse on Thinking*. Translated by John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
EM	*Einführung in die Metaphysik*. GA 40.
EoP	*The End of Philosophy*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.
EP	*Einleitung in die Philosophie.* GA 27.

FCM	*The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*. Translated by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
FD	*Die Frage nach dem Ding*. GA 41.
FG	*Feldweg-Gespräche.* GA 77.
FS	*Four Seminars*. Translated by Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.
GA	*Gesamtausgabe*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975ff.
GM	*Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt, Endlichkeit, Einsamkeit*. GA 29/30.
GP	*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. GA 24.
HCT	*History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*. Translated by Theodore Kisiel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
HW	*Holzwege*. GA 5.
ID	*Identity and Difference*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.
IuD	*Identität und Differenz*. GA 11.
IM	*Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
KPdM	*Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, GA 3.
KPM	*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Translated by Richard Taft. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.
MAL	*Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz*. GA 26.
MFL	*The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Translated by Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
N	*Nietzsche: Volumes Three and Four*. Edited by David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991.
NII	*Nietzsche: Zweiter Band*. GA 6.2.
OBT	*Off the Beaten Track*. Translated and Edited by Julian Young and Kenneth Hayes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
OTB	*On Time and Being*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
PGZ	*Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*. GA 20.
PIK	*Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.
PIKK	*Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*. GA 25.

PLT	*Poetry, Language, Thought.* Translated by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
PM	*Pathmarks*. Edited by William McNeill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
PR	*The Principle of Reason*. Translated by Reginald Lilly. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
QCT	*The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays.* Translated by William Lovitt. Harper & Row Publishers, 1977.
QCtT	*The Question Concerning the Thing: On Kant's Doctrine of the Transcendental Principles*. Translated by James Reid and Benjamin Crowe. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.
RZ	*Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*. GA 16.
SG	*Der Satz vom Grund.* GA 10.
SZ	*Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006.
TDP	*Towards the Definition of Philosophy*. Translated by Ted Sadler. New York: Continuum, 2008.
VA	*Vorträge und Aufsätze*. GA 7.
VS	*Vier Seminare*. GA 15.
WG	"Von Wesen des Grundes," in *Wegmarken*, 123–175. GA 9.
WM	*Wegmarken*. GA 9.
ZBP	*Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*. GA 56/57.
ZSD	*Zur Sache des Denkens*. GA 14.

Introduction

Our Amphibian Condition

In an important aside in his lectures on *Aesthetics*, Hegel argues that the modern human being is faced with the peculiar problem of living in two different worlds at once: one which determines her materially, sensibly, and naturally, and another that pulls the human beyond these material conditions toward the domains of thinking, meaning, and freedom. In a striking metaphor, he calls this our amphibian condition: "Spiritual culture, the modern intellect, produces this opposition in man which make him an amphibious animal, because he now has to live in two worlds [*in zwei Welten*] which contradict one another."[1] One of these worlds is described as *nature*, understood as a domain in which we are dragged down by our natural and material determinations: "For on the one side we see man imprisoned in the common world of reality and earthly temporality, born down by need and poverty, hard pressed by nature, enmeshed in matter, sensuous ends and their enjoyment, mastered and carried away by natural impulses and passions."[2] The other world is portrayed by Hegel as the domain in which the human attempts to transcend these natural conditions and strives to be a free and thinking being: "On the other side, he lifts himself to eternal ideas, to a realm of thought and freedom, gives to himself, as will, universal laws and prescriptions, strips the world of its enlivened and flowering reality and dissolves it into abstractions."[3] This book will argue that the philosophical concepts that designate these two domains are the concepts of "nature" and "world." In this portrayal, Hegel is presenting the amphibian condition as the result of a particularly modern dichotomy, one that ought to be overcome if we are to become whole human beings once again, or rather, for the first time. Hegel's philosophical task and ambition is to propose a resolution for such a contradictory condition by showing that the "truth lies only in the reconciliation and mediation of both."[4]

Hegel believes that we have become amphibious animals as a result of the dichotomies produced by the "modern intellect," suggesting that this is a historical condition that was not always the case, and ought not, in the future, to remain so. What, then, is the historical evolution that made it possible for

us to enter upon our amphibian condition? Rémi Brague has argued in his *The Wisdom of World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*[5] that this bifurcation of nature and world is largely the result of the pressures of modern cosmology. In the precritical cosmology of ancient and medieval thought, there were important historical background conditions that allowed for a harmonious relationship between cosmological questions on the one hand, and anthropological and ethical questions on the other. According to Brague, "over more than a millennium, scholarly thought was dominated by a cosmography that, on the one hand, was broadly shared by virtually all, and, on the other hand, could easily be connected to an ethics."[6] Examples of this connection between ethics and a holistic view of an ordered nature is easy to find in classical Greek philosophy, most famously in Plato's account of the creation of the cosmos in the *Timaeus*:

> This is the cause and these are the reasons for which god discovered vision and gave it to us as a gift: in order that, by observing the circuits of intellect in heaven, we might use them for the orbits of the thinking within us, which are akin to those, the disturbed to the undisturbed; and by having thoroughly learned them and partaken of the natural correctness in their calculations, thus imitating the utterly unwandering circuits of the god, we might stabilize the wander-stricken circuits in ourselves.[7]

This kind of argument is repeated by Ptolemy when he gives us reasons for the study of the heavenly bodies in his *Almagest*, suggesting that "from the constancy, order, symmetry, and calm which are associated with the divine, it makes its followers lovers of this divine beauty, accustoming them and reforming their natures, as it were, to a similar spiritual fate."[8] But as Brague shows, the view of the world as an ordered cosmos in which humans can find a harmonious place did not survive into the modern period.

As several intellectual historians have repeatedly pointed out,[9] whereas prior to modernity the concepts of nature and world were harmoniously unified in the human view of a natural cosmic order through concepts such as *kosmos*, *mundus*, and *universum*, the pressures of the modern natural sciences of the seventeenth century prepared the way for a bifurcation and opposition between the notions of nature and world. The conceptual framework of final causes that facilitated such a reconciliation in ancient and medieval philosophy was eroded by the new mechanistic natural science and by the dualisms of modern philosophy that were set up to respond to the revolutions in the modern sciences. With the rise of an understanding of nature as governed by blind mechanisms of efficient causality, the human being can no longer feel perfectly at home in the law-governed domain of nature, and is unable to easily reconcile her human and meaningful existence with the view of

nature presented by these sciences. This important shift under the pressures of seventeenth-century natural science led to a process famously described by Weber as "the disenchantment of the world."[10] Our conception of nature no longer has anything to do with the meaning of our lives, leading Weber to boldly ask: "Apart from the overgrown children who can still be found in the natural sciences, who imagines nowadays that a knowledge of astronomy or biology or physics or chemistry could teach us anything about the *meaning* of the world?"[11] The natural sciences and an account of a meaningful world have, in his account, permanently parted ways.

Our amphibian condition, the fact that we oscillate between world and nature, is a problem felt culturally in many ways. One manifestation of such a contradictory state can be found in our general adherence to the distinction between *facts* and *values*.[12] If one wants to understand what exists, to know the facts of the matter, one is in the domain of the natural sciences or the social sciences that follow upon the methodologies and strategies of naturalistic thinking. If one is after values or meaning, one must search in a completely different domain, whether it be in literature and the arts, in religion, or in philosophy pursued as a humanistic inquiry. Within the discipline of philosophy, a specialized version of the debate regarding facts and values continues to this day under the endless variations on the relationship between the natural and the normative dimensions of human experience.[13] More significantly, our amphibian condition is clearly manifest in the division between the sciences and the humanities within the contemporary university system. Long before C. P. Snow lamented the bifurcation between what he called the "two cultures,"[14] the methodologies and modes of inquiry between the sciences and humanities have led to the division of what might now only nominally be called a "university." The university may be seen, therefore, to have undergone a fate similar to its namesake, *universum*. Some more traditional accounts of the division, famously outlined by Gamader,[15] for instance, trace it to the nineteenth century and to the legacies of German romanticism and idealism. According to Gadamer, the distinction between the *Naturwissenschaften* and the *Geisteswissenschaten* was popularized in Germany through the translation of Mill's account of the "moral sciences" into the German *Geisteswissenschaften*. More recently, this account has been challenged by those who have tried to retrospectively trace an independent history of the humanities through antiquit and the Middle Ages.[16] Regardless of the details of this history, both accounts agree on the fact that the divisions have only continued to be exacerbated and become less bridgeable after the nineteenth century, with few signs of future reconciliation.

Within the history of modern philosophy, we find at least three influential and prevalent ways of dealing with the contradiction between a human meaningful world and a disenchanted domain of nature. These three ways may be

generally called *naturalism*, *subjective idealism*, and *dualism*. By naturalism I understand the project of the complete *naturalization* of the human domain, a project most forcefully and systematically proposed by Spinoza and by Nietzsche. To some extent, the human world is to be subsumed by the disenchanted accounts of nature and treated, in Spinoza's famous dictum, "just as if it were an investigation into lines, planes, or bodies."[17] This project of naturalism has taken many later historical forms, and survives today through several variants, including naturalized epistemology[18] and eliminative materialism.[19] A different strategy offers an opposite solution to naturalism by healing the dualism between a human world and nature through the idealistic incorporation of nature into the realm of human subjectivity. This *subjective idealistic* solution, first forcefully proposed by Fichte's reformulation of Kant, contends that, in the words of the late Husserl, "true nature in the sense of natural science is a product of the spirit that investigates nature and thus presupposes the science of the spirit."[20] Against both of these tendencies to reduce nature to the human world, or the human world to nature, a third prevalent strategy is the dualistic one of maintaining some type of relative autonomy between the domains of nature and world, and thus between the *Naturwissenschaften* and the *Geisteswissenschaften*. This dualistic strategy is often thought to begin with Descartes, and finds powerful reformulations in Kant, Dilthey, and Windelband.[21] Dualists produce a principled distinction by means of which the modes of inquiry into nature must be differentiated from the modes of inquiry in the humanistic sciences, often by creating a dualistic philosophy involving two separate domains of human experience—that is, by affirming rather than overcoming our amphibian condition.

What is unique about Hegel and Heidegger in the history of modern philosophy is their refusal to accept any of these three prevalent solutions to the reconciliation between nature and world. In this book I will argue that Hegel and Heidegger reject these alternatives and offer distinctive modern projects for the reconciliation between a human meaningful world and the modern view of nature disenchanted by the natural sciences. This is due to the fact that both of them are fundamentally holistic thinkers, heirs to the Platonic and Aristotelian inheritance of philosophy as an orientation toward the whole of what exists. Because of this holistic attitude, neither Hegel nor Heidegger are satisfied with the various forms taken by the modern dichotomy, nor to the reduction of each domain to the other, and seek to incorporate nature into their philosophies while responding to the modern revolution in the concept of nature proposed by the natural sciences. For both Hegel and Heidegger, philosophy must come to a synoptic vision of the human as inhabiting a meaningful world that does not exclude nature. An investigation of their respective attempts at reconciliation allows us to test the limits of the very

project of a reconciliation between nature and world, and the extent to which modernity can, or cannot, be healed or mended. I will argue that this reconciliation with nature is not a stable and successful accomplishment in either of their philosophies, and that nature marks, within both of their respective projects, a certain limit to the intelligibility of the world we inhabit. The book is therefore an account of their respective paths through these issues, and the significant impasses that these paths generate.

By tracing both Hegel's and Heidegger's respective reconciliations of nature and world, I seek to place their philosophies in conversation (and confrontation) with one another, since the strategy for such a reconciliation is fundamentally different in Hegel than it is in Heidegger. Generally speaking, Hegel continues to maintain that being is inherently intelligible, but to show that this intelligibility happens to different degrees and in different modes within nature and within spirit (*Geist*). The concept of life becomes the fulcrum by means of which the contradictions of modernity are to be reconciled. Hegel attempts to mediate between the realm of nature and the realm of spirit by arguing for their unity and distinctness, and by mediating between the teleology found in nature and the historical teleology of freedom that is the work of spirit. Heidegger, by contrast, finds nature to be a fundamental problem to his project of a phenomenological ontology in the twenties, and seeks in the thirties to rehabilitate a Greek conception of nature as that which withdraws and veils itself from all meaningful manifestation. This leads to a position that is fundamentally at odds with Hegel's claim that to be is to be intelligible, which Heidegger takes to be the fundamental decision and determination of metaphysics from its inception in Plato and Aristotle, up to its completion in Hegel and Nietzsche. Heidegger therefore seeks a different comportment to that which withdraws from any relationship of intelligibility, and such a withdrawal is, I argue, the outcome of his engagement with and reinterpretation of the concept of nature in the history of metaphysics. I conclude by showing that both thinkers offer two divergent but compelling views of what a modern reconciliation of nature and world can be, but that in their respective attempts at a synoptic view nature remains a fundamental problem. Despite diagnosing their respective failures, I maintain that the project of reconciliation is still one to be defended, and that in the absence of such a reconciliation we uncomfortably remain amphibian beings, incoherently oscillating between a domain of natural knowledge in which we do not feel at home, and the compartmentalized humanities that gives voice to our meaningful dwelling in the world.

The book proceeds as follows. It is composed of two historical interludes and three systematic chapters. The historical interludes serve to contextualize the problem of the relationship between nature and world by briefly reconstructing the understanding of these terms that become determinative for both

Hegel and Heidegger's thinking. The first historical interlude, "The Modern Dichotomy between Nature and World," creates a context from which Hegel's reconciliation between nature and world can be understood. I begin by articulating what I call the "holistic aspirations" of philosophy, tracing them from the original Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions of philosophy as an epistemic orientation toward the world as a whole, which set the ambitions of philosophizing for both Hegel and Heidegger. This holistic aspiration, I argue, undergoes a crisis in the seventeenth century under the pressures of the modern natural sciences, which begin to chip away at the holistic conception by means of a new interpretation of nature. The chapter then traces several attempts to articulate dichotomies between nature and world that reflect the new nomological understanding of nature that develops in the modern natural sciences. I first trace Kant's own distinction between the sensible and the intelligible, arguing that it becomes determinative for both later neo-Kantian dualisms and for the German idealist attempts at reconciliation. The chapter then moves through Fichte's and Schelling's respective views of how to surmount the Kantian dichotomies, arguing that it is Schelling's distinction between transcendental philosophy and a philosophy of nature that should be seen as the background for Hegel's own attempt at reconciliation. A second historical interlude, "The Modern Dichotomy Transformed and Repeated," is inserted between the chapters on Hegel and Heidegger. Its purpose is to trace the Kantian dichotomy in its later nineteenth-century manifestation as a distinction between the *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften* in neo-Kantian philosophy and Dilthey's historicism, finally outlining the contribution of Husserl's phenomenology for understanding the problem of a reconciliation between a natural world of law-governed regularities and a human and historical world of meaningful phenomena. This sets up the background from which Heidegger's reconciliation between nature and world can be understood.

These two historical interludes differ from the more systematic chapters in that they do not claim to provide any new interpretation, but primarily rehearse historical trajectories that have already been well developed in the secondary literature. As such, readers well acquainted with the history of modern philosophy, and who know these histories well, may wish to skip these sections. Those without such a background may profit from seeing the ways in which the concepts of nature and world changed and developed in the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. What becomes especially apparent in these historical reconstructions is the way in which the concept of world is severed from its predominantly cosmological dimension and comes to mean primarily a human, historical world. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the world was a term reserved for an exclusively cosmological concept, and this meaning is to a large extent preserved even in

Kant's transcendental philosophy. But in part through the transformations of Kant's understanding of cosmological concepts and their relationship to the practical realm, and in part through the further rearticulations in Fichte and Schelling, the world is transformed into the domain of human freedom and activity. This domain is in turn historicized by Hegel, who interprets the realm of spirit as the place in which the historical actualization of freedom happens. This historical understanding of the human world is then further transformed by Dilthey's historicism and Husserlian phenomenology. Because of these transformations, by the time Heidegger picks up the term "world" it no longer has a direct connection to its cosmological signification.

In the first systematic chapter, "Hegel on the Reconciliation of Nature and Spirit," I turn to Hegel's attempted reconciliation, picking up from what Hegel saw as unsuccessful in Schelling's articulation of the relationship between *Naturphilosophie* and transcendental philosophy. I show how Hegel systematically unites nature and world by maintaining a simultaneous unity and distinction between the interrelated domains of nature and spirit (*Geist*) in his mature philosophy. The distinction between nature and spirit is to be partially maintained, insofar as nature is not fully capable of achieving the self-determining intelligibility of the idea. Nevertheless, Hegel sees nature as divided into spheres of relative intelligibility, an intelligibility that is measured by means of Hegel's notion of the idea as "negative self-relation." This involves a reconciliation between a natural teleology that understands nature as striving and failing in its various attempts to achieve self-determination, and a historical teleology that is successful in fulfilling such a promise, and the concept of life becomes central to this reconciliation. However differentiated, the two spheres are united in the "idea" insofar as it is one and the same standard of negative self-relation that evaluates the relative intelligibility of what exists. I conclude by showing that contingency, as the externality of the idea that is manifested in nature, presents a serious problem for Hegel's contention that to be is to be intelligible. Nature remains, for Hegel, a problem for his version of the holistic aspiration of philosophy.

In the second chapter, "Heidegger on World and Nature: The Withdrawal of Being," I trace Heidegger's changing conceptions of nature from his early and more phenomenological work of the 1920s, to his more mature understanding of nature in the work of the 1930s and 1940s. The first two sections of the chapter treat the early Heidegger and his project of a phenomenological ontology, showing how nature remains a limit to the meaningful intelligibility he designates by his distinctive concept of "world." Nature takes on an unstable place in Heidegger's ontology insofar as it marks the mode of being of entities that are inherently without worldly existence—in his terminology, an "un-worlded world" (*ent-weltlichte Welt*). I argue that in his articles and seminars of the late twenties, we find Heidegger struggling to articulate his

understanding of nature, and that this struggle can be seen in his engagements with the concepts of worldlessness, life, animality, and a brief supplementary project to fundamental ontology that he calls "metontology." I then trace his reinterpretation of nature through the deconstruction and critique of the history of metaphysics, and to his recovery of the ways in which *phusis* for the Ancient Greeks took on the restricted sense of that which comes to presence and is made intelligible (*phusis* becomes eidos). Heidegger's rethinking of the truth of nature leads him to the decidedly un-Hegelian position that there is something about being itself that seeks to withdraw itself from any intelligible encounter. Nature becomes earth—something which resists the manifestness of world.

In the third and final chapter, "Hegel *or* Heidegger," I place the divergent respective reconciliations between nature and world outlined in chapters 2 and 3 in conversation, thereby setting up a confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger with respect to the holistic aspirations of philosophy. Borrowing the terminological distinction from Pierre Hadot's *The Veil of Isis*[22] of Promethean and orphic attitudes toward nature, I begin by showing how Hegel's Promethean reconciliation toward nature leads fundamentally to a mediated, second-nature solution to the problem, while Heidegger offers an orphic, aesthetic, and poetic reconciliation. I then show what the Promethean and orphic attitudes entail for what it means to inhabit the world meaningfully, depicting how Heidegger's homelessness and poetic dwelling differs from Hegel's project of "being-at-home" in and reconciled to the world. I conclude by arguing that following Heidegger's critique of metaphysics, there has been a radical decline in the project of reconciliation between nature and world, one that presupposes that the very project of philosophy as world-orientation ought to be abandoned as too totalizing and metaphysically grounded. I question such an assumption by claiming, in the conclusion, that the verdict is still out over whether Hegel or Heidegger are correct with respect to the intelligibility of what exists, resulting in a more modest and skeptical position with regards to the modern project of unification, while nevertheless affirming the aspiration that lies behind the demand for reconciliation.

The argument of the book has repercussions that go beyond, I believe, Hegel and Heidegger scholarship. While the primary concern of the book is focused on understanding and interpreting the ways in which the two thinkers attempt to reconcile their conceptions of nature and world, the questions and issues at play in these projects have wide-ranging implications for how we are to inhabit a world meaningfully while remaining vigilant regarding our intimate relationship to the natural. The first major consequence of the arguments of this work involves the question of the very task and possibility of philosophy. Is philosophy still possible, as Hegel would have it, as a synoptic and holistic view of all that exists, both in nature and in spirit? Can

it maintain a fruitful relationship to both the empirical natural sciences and the social sciences and humanities while maintaining its own autonomous space and methods? Or ought we to follow Heidegger and abandon those metaphysical pretentions of philosophy and give ourselves over to a task that is more humble and preparatory, the task of a kind of releasement and thinking that is less than philosophy. The decision between Hegel and Heidegger here, therefore, involves whether or not the conception of philosophy as a holistic comprehension of the world and how it hangs together is still a viable alternative today.

Related to this first consequence is a second one regarding whether or not the modern split between nature and world can be healed in its instantiation within the organization of our knowing relationship to ourselves embodied in the university and in the various forms of knowledge it facilitates. Are we to accept the division between the natural sciences and the humanities, and the various dichotomies instantiated in such a division (for example, between fact and value, explanation and understanding, mathematization and linguistic comprehension)? Should philosophy become a handmaiden of the natural sciences or define itself as a thoroughly humanistic discipline? Moreover, could it perhaps have a role in healing the very divide between these classes of disciplines. If Hegel is correct in his assessment, then even though philosophy has a relative autonomy, it ought to continue to have a strong relationship to the natural sciences and to the direct empirical investigations of nature found therein. It still plays a foundational role in the holistic organization of our various knowledges. But if Heidegger's assessment of the natural sciences as implicated in the modern spirit of the manipulation and exploitation of nature is to be believed, then this very relationship vis-à-vis natural science must be thoroughly rethought from the ground up.

In rethinking the relationship between the human meaningful world and nature, there is a further and more explicitly *practical* consequence that ought to be highlighted. It is perhaps an understatement to claim that we live in times when our practical relationship to nature is an existential problem, when the devastation of the environment and climate crises of all sorts bring front and center the question of how we ought to rethink our comportment toward the natural world. As we will see in chapter 3, despite the fact that Hegel attempts to sublimate and mitigate the modern Promethean attitude toward nature by means of the elevation from the domain of finite spirit to absolute spirit's self-understanding in art, religion, and philosophy, Hegel remains a Promethean thinker. Nature and the natural do not, on their own account, have a normative claim upon us that could guide us out of environmental disaster. True to the modern project of self-determination, the resources for any solution to these problems are to be found within the realm of spirit. Heidegger, on the contrary, wants us to fundamentally change our relationship to being

itself such that we learn to be receptive toward things and learn, perhaps for the first time, to let them be the beings that they are. According to his account, the environmental crisis in which we live is nothing but a symptom of a much deeper crisis found within the essence of philosophy, one that is grounded in the history of metaphysics that guides the historical destiny of the West. Needless to say, the stakes here go far beyond the domain of Hegel and Heidegger scholarship, as will be evident in the chapters to come.

NOTES

1. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art, Volume I*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 54; G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik I, Werke 13* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 80–81. Hereafter cited as AL and VA respectively.

2. Hegel, AL, 54; VA, 81.

3. Hegel, AL, 54; VA, 81.

4. Hegel, AL, 55; VA, 81.

5. Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*, translated by Teresa Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

6. Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World: The Human Experience of the Universe in Western Thought*, translated by Teresa Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 185.

7. Plato, *Timaeus*, translated by Peter Kalkavage (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2001), 79.

8. Ptolemy, *Almagest*, translated and annotated by G. J. Toomer (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1984), 37.

9. Alexandre Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1957); Michel-Pierre Lerner, *Le Monde des Sphères: II. La Fin du Cosmos Classique* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1997); Stephen Gaukroger, *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1210–1685* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Hans Blumenberg, *The Genesis of the Copernican World*, translated by Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

10. Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in *The Vocation Lectures*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), 30.

11. Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in *The Vocation Lectures*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), 16.

12. For two very different accounts of the dichotomy between facts and values, see Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 35–80, and Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 127–49.

13. See especially the essays collected in *Naturalism and Normativity*, edited by Mario de Caro and David Macarthur (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010). For a history of the division, see Stephen Gaukroger, *The Natural & the Human: Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1739–1841* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

14. C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

15. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Continuum, 1975), 3–8.

16. Rens Bod, *A New History of the Humanities: The Search for Principles and Patterns from Antiquity to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

17. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, in *Complete Works*, translated by Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), 278.

18. W. V. Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized," in *Quintessence: Basic Readings from the Philosophy of W. V. Quine*, edited by Roger Gibson Jr. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004), 259–74.

19. Paul M. Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes," *Journal of Philosophy* 78, no. 2 (1981): 67–90.

20. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 297; *Der Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die Transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserliana Band VI (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 345.

21. I will treat the dualistic strategy in more detail in chapter 1 of this book. On the effects of this dualism form the distinction between the sciences and the humanities and the particular mode of reasoning operative in the humanities, see Eric Hayot, *Humanistic Reason: A History, An Argument, A Plan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), 19–61.

22. Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis: An Essay on the History of the Idea of Nature*, translated by Michael Chase (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Historical Interlude 1

The Modern Dichotomy between Nature and World

HOLISTIC ASPIRATIONS AND THE PRESSURES OF MODERN SCIENCE

Philosophy lacks a proper object. On the one hand, this can mean that philosophy has *no* specific object domain of philosophical reflection. While biology is about living beings and physics about nature, philosophy lacks a specific domain upon which it operates or about which it thinks. On the other hand, this can mean that philosophy has at its disposal *all* objects for reflection; one can, after all, philosophize about anything and everything. This fact is corroborated by the proliferation of specializations within the current philosophical faculty: one can be a philosopher of science, a political philosopher, or a philosopher of religion. Moreover, many domains that used to be a part of philosophy have historically become chipped away by the natural sciences and other disciplines and become their own fields and sub-fields. Biology, cosmology, meteorology, and physics were only some of the concerns of Aristotelian philosophy; physicists used to be called natural philosophers; psychology is now its own separate discipline even though its concerns were for long considered central to philosophy.

One way of accounting for this curious lack of object-domain in philosophical studies is to think of philosophy as oriented toward the whole. At least as it was understood in its Western inception and tradition beginning in Greece,[1] philosophy was characterized as the search for wisdom regarding all things, or, to put it differently, wisdom regarding the whole. This holism is never explicitly articulated because it seemed to have the character of something obvious or taken for granted among many Ancient Greek practitioners, but we can find some passing remarks that suggest that philosophy is about anything and everything because it is concerned with the whole. Despite their opposing ontologies, Heraclitus and Parmenides already agree on something like this holism. Thus Heraclitus states: “Listening not to me but to the Logos

it is wise to agree that all things are one [*hen panta einai*]."[2] Parmenides, despite being engaged against Heraclitus in the famous *gigantomachia* concerning being and becoming, states that "it is proper that you should learn all things [*panta puthesthai*], both the unshaken heart of well-rounded truth, and the opinions of mortals."[3]

Plato famously refuses to define philosophy or the philosopher. Of the famous trio announced in the beginning of the *Sophist*—"Sophist, statesman, philosopher"[4]—only the first two receive sustained treatment and their own dialogues. Nevertheless, there are some important moments throughout the dialogues where Plato, both through the Eleatic stranger and through Socrates, suggests this holistic view of philosophy. Presenting a view that is clearly Parmenidean, the Eleatic stranger states in the Sophist that "Surely science too is one, but that which ranges as a part over some bit of it, once it is made distinct (isolated), each severally gets a name peculiar to itself. It's for this reason that arts [*technai*] and sciences [*epistemai*] are spoken of as many."[5] Presumably, while different experts can have knowledge of specific arts and sciences once they have splintered off and been named separately, the philosopher investigates the ways in which these fit together as a whole, since "science too is one." It may be wondered whether this is only a Parmenidean position, one not endorsed by Plato or by his Socrates, given that the Eleatic stranger is the speaker in this case. Socrates, after all, claims a second sailing in the *Phaedo*, one that drew him away from wisdom regarding nature (*sophias peri phuseos*)[6] toward an investigation of truth by means of words and discussion (*eis tous logous*).[7] However, we find Socrates elsewhere explicitly defending the holistic view of the philosophical life. In describing the philosophical soul's drive toward knowledge and contrasting it to an unphilosophical soul, Socrates says the following in the *Republic*: "For petty speech is of course most opposite to a soul that is always going to reach out for the whole [*psuchē mellouse tou holou*] and for everything divine and human."[8] The philosophical soul goes toward, intends, or reaches out toward the whole, the *holos*. Rather than being satiated by partial knowledge of specific things, it is oriented toward holistic knowledge or wisdom. A similar statement can be found in the *Phaedrus*, when Socrates and Phaedrus are discussing how an artful speech must involve knowledge of the souls it intends to reach. After claiming that one can only write speeches in a truly appropriate way if one understands the nature of the soul, Socrates asks Phaedrus the following rhetorical question: "Do you think, then, that it is possible to reach a serious understanding of the nature of the soul without understanding the nature of the world as a whole [*tes tou holou phuseos*]?"[9] The truly philosophical drive toward knowledge is not of a particular kind, but is oriented toward this whole, and to the view of how the parts fit in within this unified whole.

Aristotle presents a more systematic view of philosophy's holistic aspirations, articulating both the divisions among its parts and how they can be traced together back to their ultimate grounds or sources. However, he begins from the same holistic notion that can be found in the Platonic dialogues: "We take it that what a wise person [*ton sophon*] has scientific knowledge about is all things [*panta*], insofar as they admit of it, without having particular scientific knowledge of them."[10] Aristotle differentiates between the kind of universal and holistic knowledge that the wise person ought to have and the particular knowledges that fall under it. This distinction is clarified with reference to the distinction between the universal and the particular, and universal knowledge is said to be primary.[11] Thus philosophy is not simply a sum total of all specific or particular knowledges, but some kind of universal knowledge. It is clear that the wise person should not simply provide a list or encyclopedia of all particular knowledges: "Scientific knowledge of all things necessarily belongs to the person who most of all has universal scientific knowledge, since he in no way knows all the things that fall under it."[12] Once the particular knowledges of specific sciences are traced back to their grounds, there you will find philosophical knowledge, since it is about their beginnings or causes: "Theoretical wisdom is scientific knowledge of certain sorts of starting-points and causes [*peri tinas archas kai aitias*]."[13] This system of the starting points and causes of the other sciences may be called philosophy, and it branches out into different parts that make up an articulated whole.

According to Aristotle, the first major division within the sciences is between the practical forms of knowledge, such as ethics and politics, and theoretical knowledge. Theoretical knowledge, for its part, includes further division depending on the nature of its objects.[14] Accordingly, there are "three theoretical philosophies, mathematical, natural, and theological,"[15] since each of these is concerned with "a particular genus of being."[16] Natural philosophy or physics treats changeable beings who have their principles of motion within themselves and the causes of these principles of motion. It deals with entities that grow and live within the sublunary realm. The theological or cosmological sciences deal with objects that are separable and immovable in the supra-lunary sphere, and mathematics treats the universal and necessary aspects of the world that are not separable. Furthermore, there may be a science that is at the ground of all of these specific theoretical sciences, which Aristotle calls simply first philosophy and will be later called metaphysics by the tradition:

> There is a science that gets a theoretical grasp on being qua being and of the [coincidents] belonging intrinsically to it. But this is not the same as the so-called special sciences, since none of these investigates being qua being in a

> universal way. Rather, each cuts off a part of being and gets a theoretical grasp on what is a coincident of that—as, for example, the mathematical sciences do.[17]

We therefore get something resembling a system of philosophy, divided first between theoretical and practical, and the theoretical side grounded by metaphysics or first philosophy, and further divided by domains of being (natural, mathematical, and theological). Aristotle's immensely influential and determinative interpretation remained a touchstone for much of the ancient and medieval tradition, and anyone engaged in the study of one of these disciplines and subdisciplines could be seen to be doing philosophy rather than engaged in some other particular activity. Thus Ptolemy, in the second century, did not see his account of planetary motion as anything but philosophy, and his account of his project places it explicitly within these divisions set up by Aristotle.[18]

However, both the Aristotelian systematic whole and the holistic aspirations of the Platonic understanding of philosophy come under significant stress and pressure from the modern natural sciences, beginning at least in the seventeenth century. One well-known part of this story is the gradual and systematic replacement of accounts relying on final causes with ones that are primarily explainable by means of efficient causality. Thus the appeal to final causes that grounded the holistic account of philosophy in both Aristotle and his medieval followers was eroded by the reliance on efficient causes in thinkers as diverse as Descartes, Spinoza, Hobbes, and Boyle. With the pressure of modern science, I hope to show, the very distinction between the *nature* that is investigated by the sciences and the *world* that is the object of philosophy is at first introduced although not clearly thematized or made explicit. Philosophy is slowly placed in a position of either having to see itself as coextensive with modern natural science, or to separate itself off into a particular branch of the humanities. This dichotomous choice is the result of a particular interpretation of nature which first arises within mechanistic natural philosophy, but one that takes hold of the philosophical imagination and determines many of its subsequent problems and alternatives. It is worth noting that what I am calling "modern natural science" is a historically complex configuration and not a sudden and monolithic revolution. As Stephen Gaukroger has recently shown, it took centuries for such a project to be built and to gain prominence in modern European culture, and it did so through several different interpretations of science's own self-understanding.[19] Nevertheless, a few salient features can be gleaned by briefly turning to Galileo, Newton, and Descartes in order to ascertain how their revolutionary contributions affected the view of nature taken up in German philosophy following the eighteenth century. The overall effect is that nature becomes a domain more and more inhospitable to human dwelling, that is, that the

humanistic aspects of philosophy come to clash with a view of nature that does not seem to easily accommodate human meaningful experience.

Galileo can be relied on for two paradigmatic moves within this new understanding of nature. The first is the thorough mathematization of nature and the creation of a new understanding of mathematical physics. Mathematics is no longer simply one way of understanding a particular abstraction regarding natural extended bodies, but becomes famously the language through which nature speaks. As he states in *The Assayer* of 1623: "Philosophy is written in this all-encompassing book that is constantly open before our eyes, that is the universe; but it cannot be understood unless one first learns to understand the language and knows the characters in which it is written. It is written in a mathematical language, and its characters are triangles, circles, and other geometrical figures."[20] Note that Galileo still sees his endeavor as a philosophical one, and holistic in the sense that it is an investigation of the truths of the universe, but the method is now determined by a particular interpretation of what came to be called mathematical physics. The second paradigmatic move is to simultaneously create a distinction between what is later, in Locke and others,[21] called primary and secondary qualities, and to ontologically and epistemologically privilege the primary qualities in the explanation of the truths of human experience. Our tastes, smells, the colors we see, and the heat we feel can be reduced to the movements and shapes of particles and ultimately to the mathematical-physical explanations of their shapes and motions. The secondary qualities we actually experience are epiphenomenal and in some ways ontologically derivative, or as Galileo puts it: "Thus, from the point of view of the subject in which they seem to inhere, these tastes, odors, colors, etc., are nothing but empty names."[22] We may think we experience something like heat, but its explanation can be made without reference to our first-personal human experience, simply by describing the shapes and motions of tiny particles and their causal effects on our sensory organs: "I do not believe in the least that besides shape, quantity, motion, penetration, and touch, there is in fire another quality, and that this quality is heat."[23] While the examples of taste, odors, colors, and heat may make such a project seem restricted to specific forms of sensory experience, the Galilean project here includes a promissory note, namely, that much, if not all, of what we call human experience may be explained by means of a conception of nature that is nothing but the motion, quantity, and shape of small particles, and that these may be mathematically explained and understood.

While Newton is a staunch critic of certain aspects of Cartesian mechanism, especially regarding the question of forces, action at a distance, and vortices, his disagreements belie a deeper agreement regarding this general project of a mathematically explained nature. While the more explicit topic of his 1687 *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* is what may

be called celestial mechanics, he presents a more generalized project in the preface of "*universal mechanics* which reduces the art of measuring to exact propositions and demonstrations."[24] While he applies his methods primarily to the "system of the world" and to the movement of the planets, moons, comets, and celestial bodies, it is clear that he hopes that it may be eventually expanded in order to include explanations of other natural events. His aspirations become clear in the following passage: "If only we could derive the other phenomena of nature from mechanical principles by the same kind of reasoning! For many things lead me to have a suspicion that all phenomena depend on certain forces by which the particles of bodies, by causes not yet known, either are impelled toward one another and cohere in regular figures, or are repelled from one another and recede."[25] Here is a hope that perhaps atomic and chemical bonds will one day be susceptible to the same kind of mathematical principles one finds in the theory of gravitation. In the speculations contained in the queries to the *Opticks*, especially Query 31,[26] we see Newton suggesting the possibility that not only chemical bonding, but even the taste of acids and salts could one day be explained by means of the shapes and forces of small particles, much as Galileo had proposed.

The new view of nature as a system of law-bound particles in motion, which we find prevalent in both Galileo and Newton, is summarized by Boyle in his 1686 "A Free Enquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature." The vulgarly received notion is, of course, the Aristotelian one of final causes repackaged through medieval scholasticism, and is replaced by the following: "That *nature* in general is *the result of the universal matter, or corporeal substance of the universe, considered as it is contrived into the present structure and constitution of the world, whereby all the bodies that compose it are enabled to act upon, and fitted to suffer from, one another, according to the settled laws of motion*.[27] Nature, as investigated by modern empirical and mathematical physics, is nothing but the law-governed motion of bodies, and it is this new understanding of nature that produces significant pressures upon human experience. In what way does it come to challenge our human self-understanding, as well as the holistic view aspired to by Plato and Aristotle? Is it simply that we can no longer recognize our first-personal account of our experience of secondary qualities, of tastes, colors, sights, and sounds we experience in the newfangled mathematization of the natural philosophers? How does this reconceptualization of nature affect the other parts of holistic philosophy, both the practical and theological domains? We know, for example, that Galileo's condemnation by the Roman Inquisition is a manifestation of inherent tensions between the new natural philosophy and certain theological doctrines. We also see Newton attempting to reconcile his universal mechanics with a view of God as ruler of all things in the famous

"General Scholium" of the *Principia*,[28] perhaps himself nervous regarding the compatibility of his new science to his theological commitments.

It is really in Descartes's philosophical project that one most vividly sees the pressures of this new conception of nature on human experience. This is in part, I think, due to the fact that Descartes sees the revolution in a much more holistic light, as he makes clear in an early proposed title for the 1637 *Discourse on Method*, namely, as "The Plan of a Universal Science."[29] Unlike Galileo and Newton, Descartes cannot pretend to be only doing natural philosophy and to be merely investigating a particular region of being—a regional ontology that leaves other regional ontologies alone. Rather, he sees his new method as relevant for truth-seeking in all the sciences, including the human world, the soul, God, and other matters no less than mathematics and natural philosophy. We find in Descartes's early studies many of the same significant moves we described in Galileo's rethinking of natural philosophy. For example, in the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, we see Descartes proposing a geometrical mathematization of our sensory experience. For example, regarding an account of color, he suggests that "we simply make an abstraction, setting aside every feature of color apart from its possessing the character of shape, and conceive of the difference between white, blue, red, etc. as being like the difference between the following figures or similar ones?"[30] After presenting three geometrical figures that will stand in for the differences between sensible colors, he adds that "the same can be said about everything perceivable by the senses, since it is certain that the infinite multiplicity of figures is sufficient for the expression of all the differences in perceptible things."[31] Therefore, we find in Descartes both the mathematization of extended substance and the attempted reduction of secondary qualities to the aforementioned mathematization. By means of those two philosophical moves, we arrive at his mechanistic account of the world as matter in motion in his early *The World or Treatise on Light*,[32] which was famously retracted from publication once Descartes learned of Galileo's condemnation.

But Descartes goes further in aspiring to apply the principles of mechanical nature not simply to natural philosophy, to cosmology and celestial motion, but to the human herself. The human body becomes nothing but a machine, more elaborate than human-engendered machines because it is made by God: "We see clocks, artificial fountains, mills, and other such machines which, although only man-made, have the power to move of their own accord in many different ways. But I am supposing this machine to be made by the hands of God, and so I think you may reasonably think it capable of a greater variety of movements than I could possibly imagine in it."[33] His method is developed so that it may be applied beyond optics, meteorology, and geometry, and eventually leads him to questions regarding the human soul, morality, metaphysics, and God. That is, the reform is not merely one regarding our

conception of nature, but of the very idea of philosophy, knowledge, and the sciences in general. In the architectonic metaphor he develops in the beginning of the *Discourse*, he seeks to rebuild the house of knowledge on solid foundations, and this requires that one demolish all of the existing doubtful and merely probable foundations. He realizes that this revolution will leave him homeless, and even suggests some temporary housing: a "provisional moral code"[34] to be heuristically applied while he casts doubt on everything he held to be true, since "you must also provide yourself with some other place where you can live comfortably while building is in progress."[35] By establishing a provisional moral code, by stating that he will "obey the laws and customs of [his] country"[36] and withhold "the truths of faith"[37] from his method of radical doubt, Descartes is tacitly acknowledging that these are not themselves immune from his method (since they have, so to speak, to be immunized as exceptions). His revolutionary new conception of nature knows no bounds, and extends not only to ethical questions, to "the general welfare of mankind,"[38] but even to the possibility of curing us of that most terrible of ailments, "the infirmity of old age."[39]

Under the pressures of his new method, his new revolutionary conception of nature, and his new understanding of the sciences, Descartes is famously pushed into his notorious dualism regarding a thinking substance (*res cogitans*) and an extended substance (*res extensa*). He must either acknowledge that we are simply machines, bodies made up of matter in motion that perish or get destroyed like other bodies and machines, or that there is something radically different in kind operating in our minds and souls. The new conception of nature as a mechanical whole, governed by laws of matter in motion, is not a place within which the human's self-conception can comfortably live. His vision of a mechanical nature extends so far into domains of human sensibility, the human body, medicine, and morality, that there is nothing other than a rarified "thinking thing" left over. Only the mind is left on one side, and on the other, nature or the world. Descartes's dualism, with all of its famous problems, is an attestation of the difficulty in reconciling the new conception of nature to the human world, and it is a dualism that has survived through different vicissitudes in the modern philosophical tradition. Even philosophers who are deeply suspicious of the view of nature presented by the trajectory outlined above still give voice to different versions of such a dualism, as I hope to show in the next two sections.

KANTIAN DICHOTOMIES AND ANTINOMIES

Before turning to the way in which Kant appropriates and reformulates the distinction between a thoroughly naturalized and mechanized conception

of nature and the human world, it may be worth remarking that such a crude and partial history outlined above only delineates a very particular and controversial view of nature found within the Enlightenment. That is, while the mathematization of nature and the reduction of secondary qualities to primary qualities described by matter in motion held a particularly central place in Enlightenment thought, it was by no means the only, or main, conception available for philosophers. It has been shown that both in the French Enlightenment and the Scottish Enlightenment, we find conceptions of sensibility and sensation that are deeply at odds with the Cartesian picture.[40] Philosophers as diverse as Pascal, Diderot, Condillac, and Rousseau in France, and Locke and Hume in Great Britain, were critical of the mechanistic picture described above, and often preferred accounts of life, sensation, and human experience that were deeply at odds with the pictures offered by Galileo and Descartes. Nevertheless, the dichotomy that the Cartesian picture gave rise to, and the pressures it placed upon philosophy to reconcile human experience to a dehumanized conception of nature, were both extremely influential in Germany, and determinative for the reconciliations we will find in the post-Kantian traditions and in Hegel and Heidegger. This is largely due to Kant's reformulation of this dichotomy in the "Antinomies of Pure Reason" in particular and his critical project more generally, as well as to Kant's central role in framing the debate for all subsequent practitioners of German philosophy.

Already in his precriticalritical writings, one finds Kant focused on an attempted reconciliation between the view of nature and world articulated by the modern natural sciences, in Newtonian mechanics in particular, and the providential, moral and theological world described by Leibnizian metaphysics as reformulated by the writings of Christian Wolff and Alexander Baumgarten. In his 1755 "Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens,"[41] we find Kant simultaneously embracing the account of nature offered by Newton and other natural philosophers and attempting to defend it from the charge of irreligiosity and atheism: "It is, however, precisely the agreement between my system and religion that raises my confidence to a fearless serenity in the face of all difficulties."[42] We encounter the young Kant reformulating the view of nature that Descartes presented in his *The World or Treatise on Light*, claiming that it is not ultimately presumptuous to build a world out of matter, motion, and the laws governing the two: "It seems to me that in a certain sense one could say here without being presumptuous: *Give me matter and I will build a world out of it*, that is, give me matter and I will show you how a world is to come into being out of it."[43] At the same time, Kant is attempting to reformulate the metaphysics he borrows from Wolff[44] and Baumgarten,[45] in which ontology is a general metaphysics, which stands in a foundational relation to the objects of special metaphysics: God (rational

theology), world (rational cosmology), and soul (rational psychology). These two commitments lead Kant to write his Inaugural Dissertation in 1770, in which he attempts to show the derivation and genesis of two different concepts of world, one sensible and one intelligible, one phenomenal and another noumenal. Furthermore, as we will see in what follows, Kant's strong holistic tendencies lead him to attempt to reconcile, or at the very least make compatible, these two concepts into a greater systematic whole—a project that will occupy him throughout much of his critical period.

The inaugural dissertation, entitled "On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World,"[46] articulates an important dichotomy between sensibility and the understanding, a dichotomy that Kant would carry in an altered form into his critical period. Sensibility, which is tied to space and time and to the way in which objects are given to the human mind through the senses, "is the receptivity of a subject in virtue of which it is possible for the subject's own representative state to be affected in a definite way by the presence of some object."[47] It gives rise to the *phenomena* of experience. The power of the understanding or intelligence "is the faculty of a subject in virtue of which it has the power to represent things which cannot by their own quality come before the senses of the subject."[48] It gives rise to *noumena*. In one case, we have the world that is built up by modern natural science, of spatiotemporal objects governed by natural laws, whose paradigm is geometry; in the other case, we arrive at the world of metaphysics, whose paradigm is the Leibnizian "noumenal perfection."[49] The latter world then branches off into a theoretical aspect and a practical one, giving us once again a hint that what Kant is investigating here is the relationship between the world of natural science and the world of religion and morality: "This, however, is perfection either in the theoretical sense or in the practical sense. In the former sense, it is the Supreme Being, *God*; in the latter sense, it is *moral perfection*."[50] Kant denies, however, two easy modes of reconciliation that can be found in either direction. Against the Leibnizians he denies that sensibility ought to be understood as merely a form of confused cognition,[51] and against the reductive naturalist project he denies that the world of natural science is the only one available to human experience. He does this by maintaining a foundational status to metaphysical cognition and the role that God plays in the unity of the world: "Therefore, the UNITY *in the conjunction of substances in the universe is a corollary of the dependence of all substances on one being*."[52] He seeks to simultaneously preserve the world of natural science as phenomena, and the world of rational theology and morality as *noumena*.

How, then, are these two worlds to be reconciled, or are we to simply accept that we live simultaneously in two worlds, grounded in turn in the sensible and intelligible faculties of the human mind? The dichotomy between

sensibility and the understanding, between intuitions and concepts, was significantly altered by Kant's critical turn, and the strongly dualistic division between the sensible and the intelligible worlds in the inaugural dissertation would not survive in unaltered form in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. On the surface, it may seem that the Inaugural Dissertation's dichotomy between sensibility and the understanding remains intact in the *Critique*, after all, "concepts are based on the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of impressions."[53] However, the understanding is no longer something that has access to a noumenal reality, but is now understood as tied up in the forms and conditions under which even the empirical world of spatiotemporal objects come to be given to us. Space and time, as subjective conditions of empirical knowledge and forms of intuition, may even have a cognitive component insofar as a "formal intuition" that "gives unity of representation" is presupposed as a "synthesis which does not belong to the sense but through which all concepts of space and time first become possible."[54] Furthermore, insofar as the world described by natural science is not merely a heap of objects in space and time, but an organized whole that is cognized through the categories of the understanding (especially causality), nature understood as the totality of law-governed phenomena is grounded in the forms found within the human mind. The human understanding famously becomes the *lawgiver* of nature: "Thus the understanding is something more than a power of formulating rules through comparison of appearances; it is itself the lawgiver of nature. Save through it, nature, that is, the synthetic unity of the manifold of appearances according to rules, would not exist at all."[55]

If the understanding provides nothing but the form for the organization of nature that we empirically experience and is investigated by the natural sciences, Kant has recourse to a different distinction in order to account for the aspects of our human experience that go beyond the realm of possible experience. This is, of course, the distinction between the understanding (*Verstand*) and reason (*Vernunft*). Whereas the understanding remains the faculty of pure concepts that can be employed in possible experience in order to attain empirical knowledge, reason opens up a domain that is entirely problematic with regards to problems of knowledge. The understanding may yield *knowledge*, but reason (theoretically understood) only *thoughts*. The understanding is the source of concepts that underlie our experience of empirical nature, reason gives rise to ideas such as world, freedom, and God. Something like a distinction between *nature* and *world* is to be found in the difference between the understanding as a lawgiver of nature, and reason as the source for cosmological ideas: "The ideas with which we are now dealing I have above entitled cosmological ideas, partly because by the term 'world' we mean the sum of all appearances."[56] The nature of reason is itself described by Kant as a kind of infinitizing and totalizing drive within the human mind.

Reason totalizes by striving for a completion to the regressive synthesis of the conditions of any given knowledge or experience of the understanding: "The transcendental concept of reason is, therefore, none other than the concept of the totality of the conditions for any given conditioned."[57] Reason does not simply demand that, given one conditioned, a further condition be found, but rather that somehow the totality of the series be completed. If an efficient cause be given, a further efficient cause is demanded, and so on *ad infinitum* to the impossible completion of the series. While the understanding always has as its object a particular conditioned domain, reason demands the "*absolute totality of the series*,"[58] or what Kant simply calls the *unconditioned*. This unconditioned, however, is inherently problematic for reason because it pushes the mind beyond the empirical domain of possible experience and toward something that cannot be given in human intuition.

These principles of reason take us beyond the sphere of possible experience, and "there can never be any adequate empirical employment of the principle."[59] Reason demands a unity and completeness that it cannot itself fulfill or satisfy. Thus, even though we regularly find the cause of specific natural events, the view of nature as an absolute totality of causes is not something about which we can legitimately ask whether it was caused or uncaused. We have no intuition or experience of something titled "world."[60] Kant has therefore considerably altered the conception of "world," such that no object or intuition could correspond to such an idea of reason. Likewise, questions regarding whether the world as a whole is finite or infinite, whether it has a limit or whether it has a beginning are properly questions without sense or meaning, since sense is given only when properly grounded by an intuition: "We therefore demand that a bare concept be made sensible, that is, that an object corresponding to it be presented in intuition. Otherwise the concept would, as we say, be without sense [*ohne Sinn*], that is, without meaning [*ohne Bedeutung*]."[61] This lack of sense, however, does not drive reason to stop demanding the totality of the conditions in the unconditioned, and thus for continuing to ask unanswerable questions. While philosophy continues to have what Kant calls a *practical interest* in solving its fundamental questions,[62] and a *regulative* use of these ideas of reason,[63] it must come to understand that there is something mistaken in the manner in which these questions have been previously posed and answered. Traditional precritical metaphysics thought that the difficulty of knowing the whole lay in the nature of the totality of objects under investigation, but critical philosophy makes us realize that the demand should find its source in the nature of reason itself. "World" and "whole" are ideas derived from reason that have no objective correlate, they are therefore purely transcendental ideas: "I entitle all transcendental ideas, in so far as they refer to absolute totality in the synthesis of appearances, cosmical concepts, partly because this unconditioned totality also underlies the

concept—itself only an idea—of the world-whole."[64] Properly speaking, we may say with Kant that the world as a whole does not exist, if to exist is to be an object of possible experience.[65] This nonexistence of the world does not stop us from continuing to ask cosmological questions, questions that Kant lists in the following manner:

> Whether the world has a beginning and any limit to its extension in space; whether there is anywhere, and perhaps in my thinking self, an indivisible and indestructible unity, or nothing but what is divisible and transitory; whether I am free in my actions, or like other beings, am led by the hand of nature and of fate, whether finally there is a supreme cause of the world, or whether the things of nature and their order must as the ultimate object terminate thought.[66]

However, since the source of these questions is to be found in reason's drive toward the unconditioned, and this unconditioned to transgress the limits of possible experience and thus of knowledge, there is no hope in solving them theoretically. The only possible access we have to the "nature of the whole" is to the source of such a drive toward the whole as it manifests itself within our own faculty of reason.

Furthermore, insofar as reason pushes us into cosmological antinomies, the dichotomy between the natural sciences and morality we saw in the inaugural dissertation returns in an altered form. Despite the interpenetration of the understanding into the world of experience we still find, in the Third Antinomy, that the world of natural science is not one in which all aspects of human experience (the word experience here being used broadly rather than in the Kantian restricted sense) can be reconciled. Reason's demand for the totality of conditions leads to the idea of a causal closure of nature, namely, that all events in nature have natural causes, and this in turn disallows any room for freedom: "There is no freedom; everything in the world takes place solely in accordance with laws of nature."[67] On the other hand, if reason is to avoid the problems of an infinite regress and an incompleteness in the totality of the series of conditions, an "absolute spontaneity"[68] must be presupposed, or a transcendental freedom that involves some sense of causality not determined by nature alone. The former does not allow any space for morality, while the latter does, insofar as morality for Kant presupposes free human agency. In attempting to solve this antinomy, Kant goes to great lengths to show that there is no contradiction or incompatibility between nature and freedom, as long as we hold to the "two points of view"[69] that give rise to the critical distinction between objects as they appear and as they are in themselves. As empirical beings within nature, we are phenomena and bound by the same laws as all other objects described by natural science, but as moral agents we are noumenal entities endowed with the capacity for autonomy.

Unlike the Inaugural Dissertation's belief in the existence of the intelligible world, this noumenal aspect is only a thought that can never turn into knowledge. Nevertheless, this solution makes clear that there is no absolute contradiction between our natural selves and our moral agency. We do, however, belong to two different realms, not easily reconcilable: "[Man] is thus to himself, on the one hand phenomenon, and on the other hand, in respect of certain faculties the action of which cannot be ascribed to the receptivity of sensibility, a purely intelligible object."[70]

While Kant's solution to the Third Antinomy is able to show that freedom and nature, and thus our coexistence in the sensible and the intelligible worlds, are not incompatible, he is still left with the further architectonic task of reconciling theoretical reason and practical reason. If the former offers us laws of nature and knowledge of how things are, and the latter offers us laws of reason or what ought to be, we must wonder how it is that these two aspects of our lives work together into one coordinated whole to form the totality of human experience. In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant went on to formulate the laws of freedom, or the conditions under which heteronomous beings who are a part of nature can be said to be agents who act under the moral law, or can be autonomous beings. The same dualisms between nature and freedom, between sensible and supersensible, and between theoretical and practical reason are still operative within that later work:

> This law is to furnish the sensible world, as a *sensible nature* (in what concerns rational beings), with the form of a world of the understanding, that is, of a *supersensible* nature, though without infringing upon the mechanism of the former. Now, nature in the most general sense is the existence of things under laws. The sensible nature of rational beings in general is their existence under empirically conditioned laws and is thus, for reason, *heteronomy.* The supersensible nature of the same beings, on the other hand, is their existence in accordance with laws that are independent of any empirical condition and thus belong to the *autonomy* of pure reason. And since the laws by which the existence of things depends on cognition are practical, supersensible nature, so far as we can make for ourselves a concept of it, is nothing other than *a nature under the autonomy of pure practical reason.*[71]

Kant continued to work tirelessly in his later years to both show that such a dualism does not involve any incompatibility, and that they perhaps may be integrated architectonically into a coherent unity. In the "Canon" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* he proposed an idea of a systematic purposive unity that would reconcile the system of theoretical reason and the system of practical reason: "But this systematic unity of ends in this world of intelligences—a world which is indeed, as mere nature, a sensible world only, but which, as a system of freedom, can be entitled an intelligible, that is, a moral

world (*regnum gratiae*)—leads inevitably also to the purposive unity of all things."[72] In the *Critique of Practical Reason* he suggested a reconciliation based on the subordination of theoretical reason to the primacy of practical reason, insofar as all interests, including theoretical interests, are ultimately practical.[73] Finally, in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* he offers a reconciliation between the laws of nature and the laws of reason through the mediating faculty of the power of judgment.[74] The details of Kant's attempted reconciliations in these works are difficult, subtle, and beyond the scope of this cursory account, and they have been already treated carefully and systematically by other commentators.[75] I will not develop these here, given that it was precisely the *dissatisfaction* with Kant's own solutions, and with his framing of the problem, that led to many of the further developments I will be investigating in what follows. Needless to say, if Kant had successfully reconciled all the dichotomies, distinctions, and antinomies that he proposed, German idealism as a historical phenomenon would not have been necessary. Or put more prudently, if Kant had been *perceived* to be successful, there would have been no need for the further developments found in Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and others.

Therefore, despite the fact that Kant offered his own attempts at reconciliation and mediation of the various dichotomies and antinomies his system produced, his transcendental idealism seemed to Fichte, Schelling, and the young Hegel to suggest a different source for reconciliation in the highest principle of knowledge, that is, in the transcendental unity of apperception. In the spontaneity of the subject, they thought, there was a suggestion of a highest principle that could serve as a fundamental ground for his entire critical project, as Kant himself suggests in §16 of the B-deduction: "The synthetic unity of apperception is therefore the highest point, to which we must ascribe all employment of the understanding, even the whole of logic, and conformably therewith, transcendental philosophy."[76] This purely active or spontaneous principle of self-consciousness is the source for all synthetic and binding activity, or as he puts it, "is originally one and is equipollent for all combination [*ursprünglich einig, und für alle Verbindung gleichgeltend sein müsse*]."[77] While Kant is often insistent regarding the fact that we do not *know* anything regarding our own freedom, since freedom must maintain its noumenal character in order to be subtracted from the sphere of causal closure that is nature, at other times he seems to offer a link between our freedom and this theoretical spontaneity of the human intellect. One may wonder, for example, about what Kant has in mind, if not the activity of the subject in the transcendental unity of apperception, when he offers a reason to believe the humans are different from other natural entities in having transcendental freedom: "Man, however, who knows all the rest of nature solely through the

senses, knows himself also through pure apperception [*erkennt sich selbst auch durch bloße Apperzeption*]."[78] Is Kant simply being imprudent in using the word *knowledge* here in the solution to the Third Antinomy, when we know well that any knowledge of our noumenal freedom would involve a mode of intuition to which we have no recourse? After all, he insists in the Paralogisms and in §25 of the B-deduction that "in the synthetic original unity of apperception I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. This representation is a *thought*, not an *intuition*."[79] The consciousness of the self's own self-activity seems to open up a space between empirical self-knowledge (which would be knowledge of ourselves in the realm of nature and thus subject to time and natural laws), and the noumenal self-knowledge to which we have no access.

Before turning to the ways in which Fichte and Schelling were able to find resources in Kant's account of the spontaneity of the subject in order to push Kant's dichotomies in the direction of absolute idealism, it is important to highlight an important transformation that happens to the concept of world within the trajectory of Kant's philosophy outlined above. That transformation happens due to the fact that the concept of world occupies an ambiguous place between the cosmological and the practical dimension in Kant's thinking. Or put more precisely, in the historical unfolding of Kant's critical project, the concept of world tends to shift from its proper cosmological domain toward a primarily practical one. In the precritical writings of which the Inaugural Dissertation is an example, it is clear that the world still maintains a predominantly cosmological meaning that is preserved not only in early modern scientific cosmology, but in the rational cosmology elaborated by the Leibnizian school of Wolff and Baumgarten. While in the third antinomy the world may still have a cosmological meaning as an idea of reason, Kant uses it for the purpose of resolving the apparent conflict between nature and freedom, and thus uses the intelligible world as the domain in which freedom may be safeguarded from the causal mechanism of nature. As the long passage cited above from the *Critique of Practical Reason* makes clear, as the critical project develops, the intelligible and supersensible world are leveraged primarily to explain the domain of human freedom. Therefore, within Kant's philosophy we begin to see the drift in the concept of world from its original cosmological dimension to the practical dimension which will be its primary home from now on. In this sense, even if the case is a bit overstated, Rémi Brague is largely correct to remark that: "One thus notes that Heidegger is closer to Kant than he first appears—and to an unexpected aspect of Kantism: morality. One might interpret the Heideggerian concept of world as a generalization of the Kantian concept. In both cases the world belongs to the practical realm."[80] Before reaching Heidegger, however, the practical domain of the

world must still undergo several rearticulations in German idealism as well as Hegel's historicizing of the practical unfolding of freedom.

THE RESOLUTIONS OF GERMAN IDEALISM (FICHTE AND SCHELLING)

Within the understanding of the subject as spontaneous self-activity, German idealists found resources for reforming Kant's transcendental idealism beyond the strict boundaries of possible experience erected by Kant himself. Even if Kantian transcendental philosophy repositions the subject at the center of the world, a center from which our intelligible world is normatively organized, Kant continued to believe in the thing in itself as some kind of ground of our appearances and to regard the content of experience as something *given* to the subject from outside. These two presuppositions came under heavy attack by F. H. Jacobi,[81] who saw them as contradicting various other aspects of Kant's various epistemological restrictions. It was Fichte's explicit goal, in his 1794 project of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, to save the Kantian system from itself, and to render it internally consistent, without reference to these sources of contradiction. That is, Fichte wanted to defend the aspect of Kant that maintained that the subject is the ultimate grounding source for the rules that render experience intelligible, that we are somehow lawgivers of nature, while reconciling it more coherently with the supposed finitude and contingency of our human standpoint. His solution lay in questioning one of Kant's most important distinctions, namely the one between human discursive intuition and an original divine intuition, an *intuitus derivativus* from an *intuitus originarius*. According to Kant, our human finite intuition is *discursive* and *derivative* because it depends on being *given* the content of its representations and on being *affected by* external objects it did not bring into existence.[82] Our mode of intuition is contrasted to what Kant calls an *intellectual intuition*, an intuition that produces or creates the object in the very process of intuiting and knowing it. This would be "an understanding, that is to say, through whose representation the objects of the representation should at the same time exist."[83] While the spontaneity of our subjectivity is sufficient for the production of the *forms* of experience, it cannot produce its own content. By contrast, an intellectual intuition would involve "a power of *complete spontaneity of intuition*"[84] bringing into existence the object it intuits. Fichte's insight in the *Wissenschaftslehre* was that while we *do not* have this divine mode of intuition when it comes to our relationship with empirical objects, self-consciousness itself can be seen as a form of intellectual intuition.[85]

Fichte believed that while Kant was correct about the finitude of human cognition, this finitude could be understood as some kind of *self-limitation*

on the part of the subject, and that the mode of knowledge Kant denied to subjectivity is possible if *only as self-knowledge*. The transcendental subject as self-conscious activity is understood by Fichte to have a mode of existence that is radically different from the existence of other entities, since it exists by virtue *of its very activity*. Any mode of cognition necessarily presupposes what Fichte calls this "self-reverting act," or more simply, "self-consciousness."[86] Self-consciousness itself is for him not a thing that exists but an act, it is a *Tathandlung*, a deed that exists only in its activity. This spontaneous and productive action needs no external content for its objectivity; the self-reverting act by which the subject knows itself brings its self-consciousness into existence, since self-consciousness is nothing but this very self-reverting act: "it has nothing left but an act; more especially in relation to existence, it is that which acts."[87] Since in the process of knowing itself the subject as self-consciousness brings itself into existence, this activity counts as a case of what Kant called an intellectual intuition. Fichte thus uses explicitly constructivist language against Kant's own understanding of the transcendental unity of apperception, calling it a "self-constructing self [*selbst construirende Ich*]"[88] and stating that "it *is* so, because I make it *so*."[89] The very act brings into existence that which it intuits, and thus breaks the boundaries of Kant's discursive mode of intuition, whereby we always depend on some matter that is given to us receptively. The "self" or the "I" is something that makes or produces itself in the very activity of reverting back into itself, since it is nothing but this self-reverting activity. Furthermore, the categories that Kant claimed organized experience could, according to Fichte, be ultimately derived from this spontaneity of the self. While we experience the world accompanied by the feeling of finitude and limitation, this limitation is not external, but always a *self-limitation* insofar as the norms to which we acquiesce are norms we have placed upon ourselves.[90]

Fichte thus sought a subjective reconciliation of many of Kant's dichotomies. Having jettisoned the thing-in-itself, he must still account for the fact that we are finite beings, that is, that we experience our world "accompanied by the feeling of necessity."[91] This feeling of necessity should not be explained by recourse to something given in experience, to some matter taken up from outside of the self, but rather as itself a positing of the self. In Fichte's language, the not-self (*nicht-Ich*) is posited by the self (*Ich*), or "*the self posits itself as determined by the not-self*."[92] Even our limitation is a form of self-limitation, and not actual heteronomy. Furthermore, his understanding of the activity of the self is supposedly capable of reconciling the theoretical and the practical realms, insofar as this self-activity is a kind of normative or practical positing behind and before all distinctions between the theoretical and practical (and thus a deepening of Kant's claim regarding the "primacy of practical reason"): "The concept of action, which becomes possible only

through this intellectual intuition of the self-active self, is the only concept which unites the two worlds that exist for us, the sensible and the intelligible. That which stands opposed to my action—I must oppose something to it, for I am finite—is the sensible world; that which is to come about through my action is the intelligible world."[93] Both worlds are worlds of the self, but the intelligible world is posited by the self as self, and thus truly free, while in the sensible world the self posits itself as determined by the not-self, and thus as finite and accompanied by the feeling of necessity. In both cases, we have the activity of the self as the ultimate ground or source, which according to Fichte amounts to a true unification of the various dichotomies found within Kant's transcendental idealism, dichotomies that render it insufficiently systematic.

For F. W. J. Schelling, however, such a unification is premature, since Fichte's concept of a "not-self" (*nicht-Ich*) that the self strives to overcome does not give the concept of *nature* its full due. In many ways, the positing of the not-I is remains somewhat mysterious in Fichte, for whom the feeling of necessity requires a "check" or "*Anstoß*" to its free activity, and one does not get much in the way of a description of what kind of discovery one finds in this "check," or how it does not reintroduce some of the problems surrounding Kant's thing-in-itself. More importantly than this insufficient systematicity with regard to the not-self, Schelling's thinking is deeply concerned with the concept of nature and the project of naturalization one finds in Spinoza's metaphysical reworking of the world of natural science. He goes so far as to suggest that the problem of nature is the problem of modern philosophy: "The entire new European philosophy since its beginning (with Descartes) has the common defect that nature is not available for it and that it lacks a living ground. Spinoza's realism is thereby as abstract as the idealism of Leibniz. Idealism is the soul of philosophy; realism is the body; only both together can constitute a living whole."[94] Unlike Kant and Fichte, for whom the "Copernican revolution" is largely an analogy for transcendental idealism, Spinoza was a true heir to the Copernican decentering. Faithful to several aspects of the emerging scientific revolution, Spinoza wanted to see humanity in a thoroughly naturalized manner, without the anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism that plagued much of the history of philosophical thought. The human animal should not be treated as disrupting the natural order, as somehow producing a moral kingdom apart, but as simply following rules and laws similar to those found in nature. According to Spinoza there should be no unbridgeable gap between human freedom and the necessity of nature, and he famously vows in part III of the *Ethics* to "consider human actions and appetites just as if it were an investigation into lines, planes, or bodies"[95] (which in Spinoza's rationalist metaphysics, are synonyms for treating the human as simply another part of God or Nature as understood from within the standpoint of mathematical physics). From the position of

Spinoza's naturalism, transcendental idealism would simply be another more complex endeavor in a long line of attempts to claim that human thought or spirit is beyond or outside nature. He might as well be speaking of Kant and Fichte when he complains: "They appear to go so far as to conceive man in Nature as a kingdom within a kingdom. They believe that he disturbs rather than follows Nature's order, and has absolute power over his actions, and is determined by no other source than himself."[96] It is from this naturalistic standpoint that Schelling begins his lifelong internal critique of transcendental idealism.

Schelling sees a fundamental problem at the center of transcendental idealism, insofar as it gives in to the unrestrained drive on the part of thought to subsume everything real to ideal or subjective activity: "Its tendency will be to bring back everywhere the real to the ideal—a process which gives rise to what is called transcendental philosophy."[97] Transcendental idealism cannot adequately think the existence of nature without grounding it in determinations of thought; it cannot think the *autonomous* and *unconditioned* existence of nature itself. Following Spinoza, Schelling claims that there is a strange parallelism between nature and intelligence, but its relationship becomes more difficult to reconcile from within a post-Kantian perspective. From the transcendental standpoint, which he calls simply ideality or intelligence, it appears as if nature itself is somehow dependent on thought; or reality is explainable by means of ideality. But from another standpoint we are forced to think of nature as independent of thought, and required to see that even subjectivity admits of naturalistic explanations. This leads to an overturning of idealism into a position in which intelligence is ultimately understood as a product or outcome of nature: "The concept of nature does not entail that there should also be an intelligence that is aware of it. Nature, it seems, would exist, even if there were nothing that was aware of it. . . . The problem assumes nature or the objective to be primary. Hence the problem is undoubtedly that of natural science, which does just this."[98] We see here a return to the true Copernican revolution against Kant's Copernican revolution; namely, to an understanding of human intelligence as a small and perhaps accidental occurrence within a largely disenchanted and infinite natural environment—a picture developed in the natural sciences and brought to philosophical and systematic fruition by Spinoza's metaphysics. In order to do justice to this picture of reality, Schelling believes that it is necessary to develop a philosophy that is complementary to the transcendental, which he calls *Naturphilosophie* or the *philosophy of nature*. From within transcendental idealism, nature is viewed as a product of the cognizing intelligence, but from within the philosophy of nature, the cognizing subject must itself arise as a product of nature. We therefore find Schelling presenting two internally coherent systems of philosophy, one being a continuation of the Kantian and

Fichtean project of transcendental idealism, the other a kind of transcendental naturalism akin to Spinozism. While he presents these in several different versions throughout his career, famously undergoing his education in public, they find their first complete and systematic presentations in his *System of Transcendental Idealism* of 1800[99] and his *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* of 1799.[100]

In an explicit attack on Kant's claim that the understanding is the lawgiver of nature, Schelling insists with Spinoza that from within the standpoint of *Naturphilosophie* "nature gives itself its sphere of activity, no foreign power can interfere with it; all of its laws are immanent, or Nature is its own legislator."[101] Schelling articulates the need to truly think the immanent and constitutive self-organization of nature into regular forms and living organisms, a project that involves transgressing the merely regulative and reflective judgments carefully guarded by Kant's critique of teleological judgment. Nature is not waiting for us to organize it, or for Plato's butcher to cut it at its joints, rather it "produces of its own accord, as it were, regular forms."[102] Whereas in Kant's critical philosophy the order of nature is to a large extent accounted for on the basis of ideality, in natural philosophy the reverse is the case.[103] *Naturphilosophie* is the science that explains the genesis of thought from the real, that is, how formal conditions of possibility can themselves arise from natural conditions. In making these claims, Schelling was obviously transgressing the boundaries of Kant's idealism, since one can never get behind or beyond consciousness in order to see or cognize its origination. Kant was clear about the impossibility of such an endeavor and of what he claimed to be its ultimate circularity: "But how this characteristic property of our sensibility itself may be possible, or that of our understanding and of the necessary apperception that underlies it and all thinking, cannot be further solved and answered, because we always have need of them for all answering and for all thinking of objects."[104] The circularity argument is deceptively simple. One cannot know how our forms of sensibility arose or how transcendental subjectivity is possible, since any knowledge requires and presupposes those very activities. If it is the case that intelligence materially and genetically arises out of nature, our *knowledge* of that origination will itself have to conform to transcendental subjectivity and to all its conditions of possibility for knowledge.

In an exchange of letters beginning in 1800, letters that become increasingly acrimonious with time and lead to the eventual rupture between Fichte and Schelling (in their philosophies as well as their friendship), it is clear that Fichte is a more legitimate heir to Kant's critical philosophy. He states in a letter from November 15, 1800, that he still cannot accept Schelling's claim that natural philosophy is external to transcendental philosophy: "I still do not agree with your opposition between transcendental philosophy

and philosophy of nature. Everything seems to be based on a confusion between *ideal and real* activity."[105] He maintains, closely aligned to Kant's transcendental idealism, that nature must be explainable by subjectivity (or that the not-self must be explained by the self), and so it would risk the problem of circularity cited above to explain subjectivity from nature elsewhere in the system. He accuses Schelling of having transgressed the boundaries of possible experience, since he is trying to derive subjectivity from nature as *noumenon*, a procedure prohibited to our finite intelligence. From within our human standpoint, nature is itself a product, a construction or picture we create of the world, and cannot be anything else: "The subjective—in its subjective-objective nature—cannot be anything else than the analogue of our self-determination (nature as *noumenon*) that *we*, through thinking, have *imported* into what is the creation (that is incontestably ours) of our imagination. *Conversely*, the I in turn cannot be explained from something that in another place had been completely explained *by it*. But I cannot believe that you are capable of such an offense."[106] Schelling, of course, insisted on this offense, and was not impressed by the argument from circularity. In what appears to be a transcendental argument against transcendental philosophy, he claims that the genesis of sensibility cannot itself be bound by the forms of sensibility, because "it is natural that what forms the limit of our intuitive faculty no longer falls within the sphere of our intuition itself."[107] That is, the real process that produces the bounds of our intuitive faculty does not in any way have to be conditioned by our finite intuition. Schelling goes so far as to accept the possibility "that what we call 'reason' is a mere play of higher and necessarily unknown natural forces,"[108] whenever viewed from within *Naturphilosophie*. Schelling responds to Fichte's letters by relativizing Fichtean idealism and demoting it to the position of being merely one part of a larger systematic whole. He claims that just as the ancient Greeks separated theoretical and practical philosophy into an ethics and a physics, Kant and Fichte's primacy of practical reason betray the extent to which their philosophies require a physical supplementation and lack any genuine conception of nature.[109] He seeks to provide this genuine understanding of nature through his construction of a speculative physics that gives a philosophical grounding to the view of nature found in the natural sciences, a grounding that is no longer to be found within transcendental subjectivity.

By 1801, Schelling had produced two systematic attempts to ground philosophy, one by conceiving nature as a product of subjectivity and another by understanding subjectivity as itself a product of nature, and we seem to have returned, at a higher order, to some altered version of the problems of the third antinomy. On the one hand, we inhabit a world of freedom, now understood as the entire edifice of transcendental idealism, on the other hand, we inhabit a nature whose laws and regularities are immanent and natural. Of

course, we once again have the problem of how to reconcile these two opposing pictures of reality. This is something Schelling struggled with for years, constantly reinterpreting and rethinking their relation. In some texts he portrayed the two as opposed without any possible unity,[110] while in others they were two complementary parts of a systematic whole.[111] In his more romantically inclined moments he claimed that the work of art, as simultaneously a conscious product of intelligence and an unconscious product of nature, could present and intimate this higher unity.[112] His most sustained effort at uniting the two standpoints once again borrowed from Spinoza, specifically from Spinoza's notion of a third kind of knowing that understands things under the species of eternity (*sub specie aeternitatis*). According to Schelling's "identity-philosophy," while there is a perspective from which nature is a product of thought, and another from which thought is a product of nature, there must an indifference-point between the two. He called this the absolute indifference, or simply the *absolute*, and although it must be presupposed, as soon as we attempt to have any discursive knowledge about it we are again forced to access it from the different aspects of bodies or ideas, realism or idealism. This Absolute was so indistinct, so non-determinable, that Hegel famously mocked it in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, calling it "the night in which, as the saying goes, all cows are black."[113]

In the period of German idealism between 1794 and 1801, we therefore arrive at several reformulations of a question raised by Kant's Inaugural Dissertation: how do we reconcile the subject as both inhabiting a thoroughly natural world graspable through the methods of the emerging natural sciences, while also oriented toward a moral domain of freedom and intelligibility? The accounts of the natural world and of the moral world have been radically transformed after Kant's critical project, but the need for reconciliation is still felt. On the one hand, natural philosophy presents the intellect as arising out of nature's own autonomous laws, while the philosophy of transcendental idealism shows that any knowledge of nature must place that very intellect as the ground for the order and regularity we find within nature, at the same time making freedom and morality possible. It is within this context that Hegel publishes his first major work in 1801, *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, or simply the *Differenzschrift*. In it we find him giving voice to the specific nature of the philosophical need for reconciliation: "If we look more closely at the particular form worn by philosophy we see that it arises, on the one hand, from the living originality of the spirit whose work and spontaneity have reestablished and shaped the harmony that has been rent, and on the other hand, from the particular form of the dichotomy from which the system emerges. Dichotomy is the source of *the need of philosophy*. [*Entzweiung ist der Quell des* Bedürfnisses der Philosophie]"[114] The "particular form of the dichotomy" that Hegel inherits

is the one we have outlined above. Still under the influence of Schelling's thinking, Hegel here presents Fichte's philosophy as a merely subjective unity of subject and object: "The principle, the Subject-Object, turns out to be a subjective Subject-Object."[115] Against such a principle, Schelling on Hegel's account presents an objective unification along with the need of a higher unification: "In the philosophy of nature Schelling sets the objective Subject-Object beside the subjective Subject-Object and presents both as united in something higher than the subject."[116] Hegel's own project in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and in the *Science of Logic*, in which he finally breaks with the articulations of transcendental philosophy found in Fichte and Schelling and becomes a thinker in his own right, will be to find a higher form of reconciliation of the modern dichotomies he inherits from the post-Kantian idealists.

To conclude, we may summarize the cursory history we have presented here in the following manner. Under the pressures of the natural sciences, philosophy struggles to maintain its holistic project of a knowledgeable relation to the world as a whole. Rather, the world seems to split into a human, moral, and habitable world on the one hand, and a natural realm investigated by the natural sciences on the other. The purpose of this all-too-brief account has been not only to contextualize the problem of nature and world for the sake of understanding Hegel's and Heidegger's respective reconciliations, but to investigate the various ways in which this dichotomy was understood in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The dichotomy is not properly described as simply a Cartesian bifurcation between mind and matter, or between mental substance and material substance. Rather, it is first articulated by Kant as the dichotomy between the sensible and the intellectual worlds, where the former is the proper domain of natural science and the latter of noumenal freedom and morality, and then undergoes several permutations and vicissitudes in the thinkers we have described above. Hegel and Heidegger ought to be understood as thinkers that do not accept the terms of this dichotomy, that is, as seeing the various ways in which the dichotomy has been framed as insufficiently radical and therefore as determining the unsatisfactory nature of any further resolution. Furthermore, while they maintain a close and troubled relationship to the project of transcendental idealism, neither Hegel nor Heidegger will accept the incorporation of nature into the sphere of transcendental subjectivity. To some extent they therefore accept Schelling's criticism of idealism as involving an inappropriate subsumption of nature into the realm of the mind, *Geist*, or ideality.

In the introduction of the book, I outlined three possible responses to the pressures arising from the modern natural sciences: dualism, subjective idealism, and naturalism. Using this schema as a general heuristic device, one that in no way can accurately account for the nuances of these particular

philosophies, the historical trajectory outlined above may be summarized as follows. In response to the perceived naturalizing tendencies of the sciences, Kant attempts to save the human moral and normative experience by erecting a dualistic philosophy that safeguards morality from the law-governed domain of nature. Fichte, however, is unhappy with this dualism, and resolves it in the direction of subjective idealism. Schelling, on the other hand, is dissatisfied with Fichte's resolution, since he acknowledges the force of the naturalistic tendencies as exemplified by Spinozism. He demands, therefore, a higher reconciliation of the dualism between subjective idealism and naturalism, but never settles on the exact method by which this higher reconciliation is to be achieved. It is just this task, therefore, that he bequeaths to Hegel.

NOTES

1. That the Western tradition began in Greece is, of course, a deeply contested notion. Regarding the ways in which this idea was constructed in German histories of philosophy, see Peter K. J. Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780–1830* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2013). Insofar as Hegel and Heidegger explicitly subscribe to this interpretation of the tradition, I will not go into the ways in which African and Asian conceptions of philosophy may have had a different orientation. For accounts of philosophy that challenge the assumption of a Greek inception, in addition to Park's work cited above, see especially Justin E. H. Smith, *The Philosopher: A History in Six Types* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016) and Bryan W. Van Norden, *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

2. Heraclitus, in *The Presocratic Philosophers*, edited by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 187.

3. Parmenides, in *The Presocratic Philosophers*, edited by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 254–55.

4. Plato, *Sophist*, in *Plato's Sophist: Part II of The Being of the Beautiful*, translated with commentary by Seth Benardete (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4 (217a).

5. Plato, *Sophist*, in *Plato's Sophist: Part II of The Being of the Beautiful*, 54 (257c-d).

6. Plato, *Phaedo*, in *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 330 (96a).

7. Plato, *Phaedo*, in *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 342 (99e).

8. Plato, *Republic*, in *The Republic of Plato*, translated by Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 165; Plato, *The Republic II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), 8 (486a).

9. Plato, *Phaedrus*, translated by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), 71; *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 548 (270c).

10. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982a8-10, translated by C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2016), 4; Aristotle, *Metaphysics Books 1–9*, translated by Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), 8. Hereafter cited simply as *Metaphysics*, with reference to the Bekker numbers and English page numbers.

11. Aristotle, *Metaphysiscs*, 1026a30; 99–100.

12. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982a19–22; 5.

13. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982a1–2; 4.

14. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1064a25–1064b13; 186–87.

15. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1026a15–20; 99.

16. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1025b18–19; 98.

17. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003a20–25; 48.

18. Ptolemy, *Almagest*, translated by G. J. Toomer (London: Duckworth, 1984), 35–36.

19. Stephen Gaukroger, *The Emergence of Scientific Culture: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1210–1685* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006). See also the briefer synthetic account given in Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Both of these texts show a tension between the more rationalist account given by Descartes, and the more empiricist one paradigmatically found in Boyle and others, as well as showing how multifaceted and diverse were the approaches to the natural sciences in early modernity.

20. Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer* (1623) in *The Essential Galileo*, edited and translated by Maurice Finocchiaro (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 183.

21. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 134–37.

22. Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer* (1623) in *The Essential Galileo*, edited and translated by Maurice Finocchiaro (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 185.

23. Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer* (1623) in *The Essential Galileo*, edited and translated by Maurice Finocchiaro (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 188.

24. Isaac Newton, *The Principia: Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, translated by Cohen and Whitman (Oakland: University of California Press, 1999), 28.

25. Isaac Newton, *The Principia: Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, translated by Cohen and Whitman (Oakland: University of California Press, 1999), 28.

26. Isaac Newton, *Opticks, or A Treatise on the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections & Colours of Light* (New York: Dover Publications, 1952).

27. Robert Boyle, "A Free Enquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature," in *Selected Philosophical Papers of Robert Boyle*, edited by M. A. Stewart (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 187.

28. Isaac Newton, *The Principia: Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, translated by Cohen and Whitman (Oakland: University of California Press, 1999), 586–89.

29. René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 109.

30. René Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 41.

31. René Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 41.

32. René Descartes, *The World or Treatise on Light*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 81–98.

33. René Descartes, *Treatise on Man*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 99.

34. René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking the Truth in the Science*s, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 122. Hereafter cited simply as *Discourse*.

35. Descartes, *Discourse*, 122.

36. Descartes, *Discourse*, 122.

37. Descartes, *Discourse*, 124.

38. Descartes, *Discourse*, 142.

39. Descartes, *Discourse*, 143.

40. See especially Stephen Gaukroger, *The Collapse of Mechanism and the Rise of Sensibility: Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1680–1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010).

41. Immanuel Kant, "Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens or Essay on the Constitution and Mechanical Origin of the Whole Universe According to Newtonian Principles," translated by Olaf Reinhardt, in Immanuel Kant, *Natural Science*, edited by Eric Watkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Hereafter cited as "Universal Natural History."

42. Kant, "Universal Natural History," 195.

43. Kant, "Universal Natural History," 200.

44. Christian Wolff, *Preliminary Discourse on Philosophy in General*, translated by Richard J. Blackwell (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963) and Christian Wolff, *Rational Thoughts on God, the World, and the Soul of Human Beings, Also All Things in General*, in *Kant's* Critique of Pure Reason*: Background Source Materials*, edited and translated by Eric Watkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7–53.

45. Alexander Baumgarten, *Metaphysics*, in *Kant's* Critique of Pure Reason*: Background Source Materials*, edited and translated by Eric Watkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 89–131.

46. Immanuel Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, in Immanuel Kant, *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*, translated and edited by David Walford in collaboration with Ralf Meerbote (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press, 1992), 373–416. Hereafter cited as *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*.

47. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 384.

48. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 384.

49. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 388.

50. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 388.

51. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 387.

52. Kant, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World*, 403.

53. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), 105; Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, Band IV (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1911), A68/B93. Hereafter cited as CPR; KrV.

54. Kant, CPR, 170–71; KrV, B161.

55. Kant, CPR, 148; KrV, A126-127.

56. Kant, CPR, 393; KrV, A419/B447. There is another (more restricted) meaning of the distinction between nature and world which Kant appropriates from Wolff and Baumgarten, in which the mathematical synthesis of the whole is *nature*, while the dynamical synthesis is *world*. On this point, see CPR, 392; KrV, A418/B446.

57. Kant, CPR, 316; KrV, A322/B379.

58. Kant, CPR, 391; KrV, A416/B444.

59. Kant, CPR, 307; KrV, A308/B365.

60. "In its empirical meaning, the term 'whole' is always only comparative. The absolute whole of quantity (the universe), the whole of division, of derivation, of the condition of existence in general, with all questions to whether it is brought about through finite synthesis or through a synthesis requiring infinite extension, have nothing to do with any possible experience." (Kant, CPR, 435; KrV, A483/B511)

61. Kant, CPR, 260; KrV, A240/B299.

62. Kant, CPR, 424; KrV, A466/B494.

63. Kant, CPR, 450; KrV, A509/B537.

64. Kant, CPR, 385; KrV, A407-408/B434.

65. "Since the world does not exist in itself, independently of the regressive series of my representations, it exists in itself neither as an infinite whole nor as a finite whole." (Kant, CPR, 448; KrV, A505/B533).

66. Kant, CPR, 422; KrV, A463/B491.

67. Kant, CPR, 409; KrV, A445/B473.

68. Kant, CPR, 411; KrV, 446/B474.

69. Kant, CPR, 467; KrV, A538/B566.

70. Kant, CPR, 472; KrV, A546-547/B574-575.

71. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, translated by Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 38; *Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft* in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Band V (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1900-), 43.

72. Kant, CPR, 642; KrV, A815/B843.

73. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, translated by Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 100–2; *Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft* in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Band V (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1900-), 119–21.

74. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8; *Kritik der Urteilskraft* in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Band XX (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1942), 202.

75. See especially: Susan Neiman, *The Unity of Reason: Rereading Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), Angelica Nuzzo, *Kant and the Unity of Reason* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2005), and Alfredo Ferrarin, *The Powers of Reason: Kant and the Idea of a Cosmic Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

76. Kant, CPR, 154; KrV, B134.

77. Kant, CPR, 152; KrV, B130.

78. Kant, CPR, 472; KrV, A546/B574.

79. Kant, CPR, 168; KrV, B157.

80. Rémi Brague, *The Wisdom of the World*, 227.

81. Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, "Supplement on Transcendental Idealism" to *David Hume on Faith, or, Idealism and Realism*, in *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*, translated by George di Giovanni (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 331–38.

82. "Our mode of intuition is dependent upon the existence of the object, and is therefore possible only if the subject's faculty of representation is affected by that object." Kant, CPR, 90; KrV, B72.

83. Kant, CPR, 157; KrV, B139.

84. Kant, CJ 290; KdU 406.

85. For detailed histories of these developments, see Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism 1781–1801* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), and Eckart Förster, *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy: A Systematic Reconstruction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

86. J. G. Fichte, *Science of Knowledge*, translated by Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 37; Johann Gottlieb Fichtes, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. I, ed. I. H. Fichte (Belin: De Gruyter, 1971). Hereafter cited simple as SK; SW I.

87. Fichte, SK, 33; SW I, 462.

88. Fichte, SK, 35; SW I, 459.

89. Fichte, SK, 36; SW I, 460.

90. For a thorough account of this self-relation, see Frederick Neuhouser, *Fichte's Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

91. Fichte, SK, 31; SW I, 455.

92. Fichte, SK, 218; SW I, 246.

93. Fichte, SK, 41; SW I, 467.

94. F. W. J Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*, translated by Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), 26. *Freiheitsschrift* (SW 7: 356)

95. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, in *Complete Works*, translated by Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), 278.

96. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, in *Complete Works*, translated by Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), 277.

97. F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, translated by Keith Peterson (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 193.

98. F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, translated by Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 5.

99. F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, translated by Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).

100. F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, translated by Keith Peterson (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004). Hereafter cited as *Philosophy of Nature*.

101. Schelling, *Philosophy of Nature,* 17.

102. Schelling, *Philosophy of Nature*, 194.

103. Schelling, *Philosophy of Nature*, 194: "the ideal must arise out of the real and admit of explanation from it . . . the task of the philosophy of nature is to explain the ideal by the real."

104. Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science*, translated by Gary Hatfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 72; *Prolegomena zu einer künftigen Metaphysik die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*, in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Band IV (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1900–), 318.

105. J. G. Fichte/F.W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophical Rupture between Fichte and Schelling: Selected Texts and Correspondence (1800–1802)*, translated by Michael Vater and David Wood (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 42.

106. J. G. Fichte/F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophical Rupture between Fichte and Schelling: Selected Texts and Correspondence (1800–1802)*, translated by Michael Vater and David Wood (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 48.

107. Schelling, *Philosophy of Nature*, 195.

108. Schelling, *Philosophy of Nature*, 195.

109. J. G. Fichte/F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophical Rupture between Fichte and Schelling: Selected Texts and Correspondence (1800–1802)*, translated by Michael Vater and David Wood (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 45.

110. F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, translated by Keith Peterson (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004).

111. Schelling, *Introduction to the Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, in F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, translated by Keith Peterson (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 193–232.

112. F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, translated by Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).

113. Hegel, PhS, 9; PhG, 22.

114. Hegel, DFS, 89; DS, 20.

115. Hegel, DFS, 81; DS, 11.

116. Hegel, DFS, 82; DS, 12.

Chapter 1

Hegel on Nature and *Geist*

HEGELIAN HOLISM AND RECONCILING NATURE AND WORLD

Hegel revives the holistic approach to philosophy that I briefly outlined in the first section of the book, namely, the Platonic and Aristotelian conception of philosophy as an orientation toward the nature of the whole. However, the pressures of natural science that led to the severance of nature and world, together with the overly subjective attempts at unification in Kant's and Fichte's transcendental idealism, lead him toward a very different position with regard to such reunification. For Hegel, there is no return to a prior unity which would involve a simple erasing and undoing of the work of modern philosophy. Rather, like Schelling before him, Hegel begins by partially accepting the Kantian correction to dogmatic substance metaphysics, while acknowledging the partiality and overly subjective character of such an overcorrection. His entire philosophy can be seen as an attempt to reconcile the opposition between nature and world and the many dichotomies that it gives rise to.[1] This drive toward holistic reconciliation is evident in his early works of 1801 and 1802, and comes to full articulation in 1807 in the famous preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

As we saw briefly in the third section, "The Resolutions of German Idealism," Hegel argues in the 1801 *Differenzschrift* that the historical need for philosophy arises from reason's systematic and holistic demands against a given dichotomy: "Dichotomy is the source of *the need of philosophy* [*Entzweiung ist der Quell* des Bedürfnisses der Philosophie]."[2] The particular version of the dichotomy that he is working with in that text is the same one we outlines in the third section, that is, the subjective unity of subject and object that one finds in Fichte's rereading of Kant's transcendental idealism, and Schelling's objective unity of subject and object presented in

his *Naturphilosophie*.[3] Hegel makes use of Kant's distinction between the understanding or intellect (*Verstand*) and reason (*Vernunft*) in order to make the former responsible for the divisions and dichotomies, while the latter retains the drive toward and possibility for reconciliation, unity, and totality. The intellect has not only a tendency to make distinctions, but to create antitheses ("antitheses such as spirit and matter, soul and body, faith and intellect, freedom and necessity, etc.")[4] whereas reason seeks to overcome such antitheses in systematic unification ("the sole interest of Reason is to suspend [*aufzuheben*] such rigid antitheses.")[5] While Kant formulated the need and drive toward totality and unification in his conception of the work of reason, his and Fichte's versions of this unification have the defect that Schelling pointed out, namely, that nature as a product of reason, or the not-I and a posit of the I, are not satisfying forms of unification. What we are left with is an unsatisfied version of the holistic need of philosophy, the need for reconciling reason with nature: "the need for a philosophy that will recompense nature for the mishandling that it suffered in Kant and Fichte's systems, and set Reason itself in harmony with nature, not by having Reason renounce itself or become an insipid imitator of nature, but by Reason recasting itself into nature out of its own inner strength."[6] What Hegel means by the important phrase "Reason recasting itself into nature" will become apparent later in this section.

Although this is not as explicitly and systematically laid bare as in his later work, Hegel begins here to give a historical and epochal flavor to such a reconciliation. That is, the objective unity of subject and object is to be found in pre-Kantian dogmatic metaphysics, perhaps best exemplified by the substance metaphysics of Spinoza and Spinoza's account of nature or God in the *Ethics*.[7] On the other hand, the subjective unity of subject and object is identified with modernity, with Descartes's turn to subjectivity and with Kant and Fichte's deepening of that turn. In his 1802 text *Faith and Knowledge*, Hegel concludes his inquiry by making this historical interpretation explicit: "In their totality, the philosophies we have considered have in this way recast the dogmatism of being into the dogmatism of thinking, the metaphysic of objectivity into the metaphysic of subjectivity. . . . The world as thing is transformed into the system of phenomena or affections of the subject."[8] The modern world recoils against the inhospitable nature described by the natural sciences, recoils against a nature determined by causal laws, and turns toward a "metaphysic of subjectivity" in order to find its true home. Against what he sees as the one-sidedness of each of these approaches, Hegel understands his philosophical task as an account of the whole that preserves the partial truth of each of these approaches while elevating them both to a higher truth. In the famous programmatic words of the preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*,

"everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject* [*Es kommt . . . alles darauf an, das Wahre nicht als Substanz, sondern ebensosehr als Subjekt aufzufassen und auszudrücken*]."[9] Using different terminology from that of the earlier texts, one may paraphrase this statement in different ways: not only as Spinoza's substance metaphysics, but equally as Fichte's subjective idealism; or not only as nature, but equally as reason; or not only as the pre-Kantian dogmatic metaphysics, but equally as modern critical metaphysics.

It is important to note, however, that the "equally [*ebensosehr*]" in the famous phrase should alert us that this is not a question of substituting the latter for the former, that is, substituting a metaphysics of the subject for a substance metaphysics. While this version of the unification stresses the "both/and" of the relationship, that is, that the True ought to be expressed as *both* substance *and* subject, at other places he stresses the "neither/nor" of their respectively partial approaches. The True ought to be expressed and grasped *neither* merely as substance, *nor* merely as subject. Thus in the conclusion to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel writes: "Spirit, however, has shown itself to us to be neither merely the withdrawal of self-consciousness into its pure inwardness [*Zurückziehen des Selbstbewußtseins in seine reine Innerlichkeit*], nor the mere submergence of self-consciousness into substance, and the non-being of its difference; but Spirit is *this movement* of the Self which empties itself of itself [*sich seiner selbst entäußert*] and sinks itself into its substance."[10] The major conceptual innovation that Hegel is adding here is the idea of a dialectical process by which substance and subject interpenetrate one another. While Schelling had already articulated the two standpoints of substance and subject, together with the need for their unification, Hegel came to see Schelling's various attempts at unification through an indifference point or an intellectual intuition as overly static and formal. Thus, already in the *Differenzschrift*, Hegel had intimated that reason recasts "itself into nature out of its own inner strength."[11] Reason does not have an insight into a static unity of the world-whole, but rather is to be understood as a *process* or *activity* of unification: "Reason constructs itself in its emanation as an identity that is conditioned by this very duplicate; it opposes this relative identity to itself once more, and in this way the system advances until the objective totality is completed."[12] Even in this early work we already see the paradigm for Hegel's dialectical process. In slightly different language, in the passage of the *Phenomenology* cited above he likewise speaks of Spirit as "*this movement* of the Self which empties itself of itself [*sich seiner selbst entäußert*] and sinks itself into its substance."[13] The unification must be understood as a result, and the result of the movement of a specifically dialectical process.

Whatever unification will be established between substance and subject, or between nature and reason, ought to be understood essentially as the result of a process of division and subsequent unification. There is therefore no question of returning to a prior or immediate unity, that is, of erasing or undoing the contributions of subjectivity in order to have access to an untarnished primordial intuition of the whole. Hegel's holism is often associated with his pithy phrase, "The true is the whole," but the subsequent sentences qualify and further explain what is meant by such holism: "The true is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development [*Entwicklung*]. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*, that only in the *end* is it what it truly is."[14] Hegel's holism is a developmental and dialectical holism, in which what it means to be a whole can only be understood by undergoing the movement and process of becoming-a-whole. Here is one of Hegel's most succinct accounts of such a dialectical becoming:

> Further, the living Substance is being which is in truth Subject, or, what is the same, is in truth actual only in so far as it is the movement of positing itself [*die Bewegung des Sichselbstsetzens*], or is the mediation of its self-othering with itself. This Substance is, as Subject, pure, *simple negativity*, and is for this very reason the bifurcation of the simple; it is the doubling which sets up opposition, and then again the negation of this indifferent diversity and of its antithesis. Only this self-*restoring* sameness [*sich* wiederherstellende *Gleichheit*], or this reflection in otherness within itself—not an *original* or *immediate* unity as such—is the True.[15]

If our goal is to restore unity to the many dichotomies that the modern understanding of nature and the world have given rise to, any such unity must *pass through* the dichotomies and antitheses produced by modernity. It must acknowledge the necessity for such distinctions, as well as the necessity for their overcoming, and do so through a recognition of the dialectical process of division and unification. In other words, any resultant whole must be mediated by the process of division, and not an immediate whole. We must recognize a process and development whereby one and the same thing is responsible for the doubling or the opposition and for the subsequent unification. In some senses, this may seem like a return to Fichte's *Ich* that posits both itself and its opposite, and formally it appears very similar. However, given Hegel's repeated insistence that Fichte's unification is still too subjective and ends up incorporating nature into the sphere of subjectivity, we will have to see in the arguments of the following sections the details of how it is that Hegel's dialectical development is capable of avoiding such a subjective incorporation.

Hegel's holism returns philosophy to its original vocation of articulating and expressing the nature of the whole, but such a return must pass through the various processes of division and dichotomy revealed by the modern world. This holism is thereby not merely synoptic, as it was in its original manifestations, but dialectical and historical. One way to understand Hegel's holism is to see his philosophy as a thoroughly modern attempt to historically reconcile nature and world, or in his terms, nature and spirit (*Geist*). This way of understanding Hegel's project places him within the context of the modern dichotomies outlined in the first historical interlude. Some version of the distinction between subject and object, between subjectivity and substantiality, is at the heart of Hegel's systematic thinking. This fact is apparent in the way he organizes his *Science of Logic*, first by moving through the categories of being and essence in the objective logic, then turning to the subjective logic proper. This same division is also present in the way he organizes his *Encyclopedia*, where after a logical introduction, the Idea of science splits off into two separate domains of a *Philosophy of Nature* (Part II of the Encyclopedia) and a *Philosophy of Spirit* (Part III of the Encyclopedia). However, it should be obvious by now that Hegel does not understand the dichotomy between nature and world as some modified version of the Cartesian mind-body problem, or even of Kant's phenomenal and intelligible worlds, but rather as a dichotomy between the world as a whole viewed from the standpoint of substance (*Natur*) and the world as a whole viewed from the standpoint of subjectivity (*Geist*). If that is the case, we must first elucidate what Hegel means by the terms *Natur* and *Geist* as his peculiar understanding of the distinction between nature and world, in order to then turn to his project of unification in the following section.

Within several systematic contexts, Hegel makes it explicit that nature and spirit form some kind of foundational distinction for him, that is, that each is an *other* to the other. At the end of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he presents nature variously as the "negative" of Spirit, as the "limit" to Spirit, or as "the externalized Spirit [*die entäußerte Geist*]."[16] This may suggest a strong dichotomy or antithesis, however, he qualifies such otherness by suggesting that "self-knowing Spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limit."[17] This already suggests that nature is a kind of internal limit to Spirit, that it stands to Spirit in a certain relationship that is not altogether alien. He repeats this formulation in the *Science of Logic*: "Such an other, determined as other, is physical nature; it is the other of spirit. This its determination is thus at first a mere relativity by which is expressed, not a quality of nature itself, but only a relation external to it."[18] It soon becomes apparent that this contrastive definition is appropriate for whenever nature shows up *within* the domain of Spirit, that it does not thoroughly exhaust the definition of nature, but rather describes how nature is to be understood in relation to

Spirit. From the standpoint of the Idea developed in the *Science of Logic*, one can also say that "Nature has presented itself as the Idea in the form of otherness."[19] All of these negative determinations of nature may appear to suggest that nature may not play an important or constitutive role in Hegel's philosophy. In fact, they suggest that perhaps Hegel is siding with Fichte's understanding of the positing of the *nicht-Ich* over and against Schelling's conception, and that his early allegiance to Schelling in 1801 and 1802 has subsided by the time of his mature writings. This determination of nature as simply the other or negative of spirit has led to interpretations of Hegel along more Fichtean lines, ones that, in Robert Pippin's account, "leave nature out of it and accept and work within a basic distinction between spirit and nature, *Geist* and *Natur*."[20]

On the other hand, Hegel is clear that more conceptual work needs to be done in order to fully realize the unity between nature and spirit and to, in his early words, "recompense nature for the mishandling that it suffered in Kant and Fichte's systems."[21] Nature is not merely an indeterminate "other" against which the Self strives, nor is it to be understood as merely a sum-total of appearances externally ordered by the human understanding. Hegel offers more than simply a negative definition of nature in relation to spirit by adding that it is not only external to Spirit and to the Idea, but that it is a negative *to itself*: "the quality of nature taken as such is just this, to be other in its own self, that which is *external to itself*."[22] Moreover, he spends a great deal of energy in the *Encyclopedia* articulating the conceptuality and intelligibility of several domains of nature, beginning with mechanics, moving through physics and chemistry, all the way to the organism and biological categories. More surprisingly, a structurally identical stratification of nature that we find in the *Encyclopedia* is incorporated into the pivotal movements of the *Science of Logic* that lead up to the Idea. There, developing an account of objectivity from within the subjective logic, Hegel moves through mechanism, chemism, and teleology, and unexpectedly includes a chapter on "Life" within his account of "The Idea."[23] Hegel is aware that readers will be surprised by this inclusion, and therefore begins the section with the following claim: "The Idea of Life is concerned with a subject matter so concrete, and if you will so real, that with it we may seem to have overstepped the domain of logic as it is commonly conceived."[24] As a matter of fact, the idea of life appears at various crucial transitions throughout Hegel's thinking, and it has rightly been observed in more recent secondary literature that it is a crucial notion for understanding Hegel's speculative notion of identity.[25] For example, it takes on a crucial role in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness, both at the end of the section "Force and Understanding,"[26] and in the movement to self-consciousness as desire

in "The Truth of Self-Certainty."[27] All of this suggests that a merely negative and Fichtean understanding of nature will be insufficient for an understanding of Hegel's project, despite his known reservations regarding what he saw as the empty formalism of Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*.

Before turning in the next section to Hegel's own reconciliation between nature and *Geist*, we should first of all offer a preliminary sketch of what it is that Hegel means by *Geist*, and therefore what it is that must be reconciled with nature. I have left the term "Geist" untranslated up to now, since the two most notable translations into English each have their respective shortcomings. Spirit, the more literal translation, can easily suggest a supersensible quality that is not meant by the thoroughly immanent thinker who is a noted and fierce critic of all forms of transcendence. Mind or mindedness, as it is sometimes translated, may suggest an overly intellectual or cognitive interpretation, one that does not immediately suggest all of the more substantial aspects of objective *Geist*, including our actions, habits, institutions, laws, and religious communities. *Geist* or Spirit, when contrasted to nature, names the social and historical space in which humans come to be self-consciously at home. Spirit is the name for the space that humans find hospitable once they have returned from their estrangement in nature, understood as an internal other to spirit. Therefore, spirit can be taken as a concept almost identical to the concept of world when contrasted with nature (*Natur*). That is, while the concept of "world" (*Welt*) is not a technical term in Hegel's philosophy, the concept of spirit takes on the valence that world had in the post-Kantian context developed in the first historical interlude. This is evident in his summary account of spirit in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which begins: "Reason is Spirit when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to truth, and it is conscious of itself as its own world and of the world as itself [*sie sich ihrer selbst als ihere Welt und der Welt als ihrer selbst bewußt ist*]."[28] Spirit is the acknowledgment of being its own world, its own historical and spiritual unfolding. Spirit is different from previous stages of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in that they are shapes of an actual temporally unfolding world: "These shapes, however, are distinguished from the previous ones by the fact that they are real Spirits, actualities in the strict sense of the word, and instead of being shapers merely of consciousness, are shapes of a world [*Gestalten einer Welt*]."[29] In the spiritual world, humans come to find themselves after having sought themselves outside of themselves, which means that spirit is in Hegel's dialectical language a result of a process by which it externalizes itself from itself and returns back to itself. Only as spirit is substance transfigured or elevated into being truly subject. As Hegel puts it: "It is the self of actual consciousness to which it stands opposed, or rather which it opposes to itself as an objective, actual *world* [*wirkliche* Welt], but a world which has completely lost the meaning for the self of something alien

to it [*alle Bedeutung eines Fremden*]."[30] Spirit is the form of life in which the process of humanity's self-conscious coming to itself is to be realized. But what exactly does this mean?

In order to determine spirit as a process of coming to itself, Hegel explains it as a kind of negative self-relation, or as he puts it in the *Encyclopedia*, an identity that is "*absolute negativity*."[31] The negating aspect of spirit is both a negative in relation to nature, and more specifically to the natural that is present within spirit—a negative to an internal limit. It ought not to be an immediate identity with itself, or a Fichtean Ich=Ich, but an identity that has become mediated by means of its negation of and return from nature: "Thus at the same time it is this identity only so far as it is the return out of nature."[32] Therefore, spirit can only truly be at home with itself in its other insofar as it has freed itself from its submersion in nature. This negative self-relation is Hegel's way of describing the "good" infinite over and against the "bad" infinite of indefinite extension. The infinitude of spirit as negative self-relation is what gives it a truly mediated autonomy: "This being-with-itself of the 'I' in its difference from itself [*Beisichselbstsein des Ich in seiner Unterscheidung*] is the 'I's infinitude or ideality."[33] This process of coming to be at home with itself in otherness is everywhere described by Hegel through a threefold process of: (a) immediate self-identity, (b) an othering of itself into objectivity, and (c) a return to itself out of its otherness into a truly infinite and mediated self-identity. He describes these three stages of spirit in the *Encyclopedia* as first "the form of self-relation," second "the form of reality: realized, i.e., in a *world* produced and to be produced by it" and third "a unity of Spirit as objectivity and of Spirit as ideality and concept."[34] The second moment is especially important for our purposes, since it is in this second moment that spirit is in contact with nature and with its externality. The second moment is necessary for the third, which is the proper domain of what Hegel calls Absolute Spirit. Here is an especially lucid description of the second moment in a *Zusatz* to the *Encyclopedia*: "[Spirit] becomes for itself only by particularizing, determining itself, making itself into its own presupposition, into the Other of itself, first relating itself to this Other as to its immediacy, but making itself free of this Other *qua* Other. As long as Spirit stands related to itself as to an Other, it is only subjective Spirit, originating in Nature and at first itself natural Spirit."[35] Spirit begins as submerged within its natural element, and only in the process of freeing itself from this natural element and being in a negative relation to this other as an internal other does it truly come to be itself. This relationship of spirit to nature and its emergence from nature is developed in detail by Hegel through its movements within anthropology, phenomenology, psychology, the philosophy of right, and finally an account of universal history as the becoming of spirit. This process suggests that in

addition to a dichotomy between spirit and nature, there is some continuity and unity between the two spheres, through which such process can take place. We will now turn to such a continuity and unity.

ON THE UNITY *AND* DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURE AND SPIRIT

Accounts of Hegel's idealism have wavered between two opposing interpretive poles for some time now. One general line of interpretation, historically the more traditional one, sees in Hegel's philosophy the expression of a robust metaphysical rationalism, while another draws his idealism closer to Kant's critical philosophy and its various restrictions.[36] While this is not always made explicit, these different readings have repercussions for how we interpret the relationship between the human historical world of spirit and nature within Hegel's philosophy. The metaphysical interpreters tend to see nature as a "manifestation" of *Geist*, and read the *Natur*/*Geist* distinction as somehow unified or overcome speculatively, while the non-metaphysical readers emphasize the distinction until it almost becomes a Kantian dichotomy. In his classic study, for example, Charles Taylor describes *Geist* as an elaborate and historically mediated "cosmic spirit"[37] at work in and through everything, including nature.[38] On this reading, Hegel's rationalism implies that everything is somehow grounded in or an emanation of the concept (*der Begriff*). What we end up with is a fairly exuberant form of monistic rationalism, in which all of existence derives from the thinking activity of a cosmic substance, or in Taylor's words: "For the inner truth of things is that they flow from thought, that they are structured by rational necessity . . . the Concept is an active principle underlying reality, making it what it is."[39] Even the supposedly contingent products of nature are expressions or emanations of *Geist*. Of course, Hegel is presented as having an elaborate defense of this position, and it does not have to be crude or cartoonish in the way I have just presented it. In fact, many commentators have successfully attempted to refine and defend this picture of Hegel as a monistic rationalist, sometimes by showing how this monism is actually quite epistemologically sophisticated,[40] or by demonstrating how it was historically motivated by the necessity of uniting Fichte's notion of freedom with Spinozistic naturalism and substance monism.[41]

At the same time, another general line of interpretation has developed that wishes to eliminate the alleged metaphysical excesses of Hegelian metaphysics and to reconstruct him as a non-metaphysical thinker, whether it be as a category theorist,[42] a neo-Kantian idealist,[43] or a defender of the social-normative dimension of rationality.[44] For these readers, the ontological

claims that appear to belie Hegel's reversion to precritical metaphysics can be reinterpreted or deflated once one aligns Hegel's philosophy with the Kantian block on the metaphysical pretensions of transcendental realism and dogmatism in all its forms. Hegel is seen to largely agree with Kant that, in Robert Pippin's words, "contrary to the rationalist tradition, human reason can attain nonempirical knowledge only about itself, about what has come to be called recently our 'conceptual scheme,' and the concepts required for a scheme to count as one at all."[45] The metaphysical pretensions of the Hegelian program are curbed so that they become compatible with Kantian humility. One of the notorious difficulties with the post-Kantian or non-metaphysical interpretations is how to reconstruct Hegel's philosophy without either disregarding significant aspects of his system or ignoring the clearly metaphysical positions he expounds, especially in regards to the rationality and conceptuality of nature. One possible strategy would be to discard aspects of Hegel's system that exceed the non-metaphysical interpretation, as Hartmann sometimes suggests: "one might, for example, discard parts of the philosophy of nature: the richness of natural phenomena is such that no convincing single-file perusal can be offered."[46] However, once one is finished trimming Hegel of all his metaphysical excesses, one wonders whether what is left over bears any resemblance to Hegel's actual self-understanding of his own project.

In many ways, much of this debate between the non-metaphysical and the metaphysical interpretations centers on the issue of how exactly to think the relationship between nature and spirit within Hegel's idealism. The metaphysical interpretation, as we have seen, tends to understand nature as some form of emanation of Spirit, in line with Hegel's infamous claims that the Idea "externalizes" itself or "freely releases" itself into nature.[47] The non-metaphysical interpretations, on the other hand, minimize and deflate the importance of nature for Hegel, focusing instead on the distinction he makes between the spheres of Spirit and Nature. Robert Pippin goes so far as to suggest that we "leave nature out of it and accept and work within a basic distinction between spirit and nature, *Geist* and *Natur*."[48] Hegel is seen as primarily preoccupied with *Geist*, understood as the realm of human practice and a relatively autonomous sphere of normativity—a form of "social space" as Terry Pinkard puts it: "it is a form of life that has developed various social practices for reflecting on what it takes to be authoritative for itself in terms of whether these practices live up to their own claims and achieve the aims that they set for themselves."[49] On this reading, even though Hegel does say many interesting (and often extravagant) things about nature, these claims are inconsequential for his philosophy of spirit, which is what really matters for Hegel in the end. After all, it is only within spirit that the concept comes into its own and becomes self-conscious. We are better served by leaving nature behind and maintaining a largely post-Kantian reformulation of the

dichotomy between the self-conscious realm of autonomy and the natural realm of heteronomy and natural necessity.

As is often the case with Hegel, the truth is somewhere in the middle, or put differently, we have to navigate a middle course by means of which both the metaphysical and the non-metaphysical accounts are shown to be only partially correct. This involves understanding the truth not only as substance, but equally as subject, or in this case, by expressing both the unity and the difference between nature and spirit. Against the view that Hegel is an extravagant rationalist monist, the non-metaphysical interpretation is correct to insist on the fact that nature is not exhausted by conceptual determination, and that there is an important distinction between the realm of *Geist* as the realm in which complete rational self-determination is possible and nature as the realm in which the concept is constantly at a loss. This is to insist that Hegel believes that there is much in nature that is without reason or irrational. As is well known since Herr Krug asked Hegel to deduce his pen from the Idea, Hegel believes that there are contingent aspects to nature that escape rational grounding: "This impotence of Nature sets limits to philosophy [*Jene Ohnmacht der Natur setzt der Philosophie Grenzen*] and it is quite improper to expect the Concept to comprehend—or as it is said, construe or deduce—these contingent products of Nature."[50] According to Hegel, the manifold forms in which nature expresses itself cannot be conceptually grasped because nature's multiplicity outstrips conceptual determination. He implies that there are some aspects of nature that are irrational, both in the sense of being nonconceptual (*begrifflose*) and without reason (*Vernunftlose*): "This is the impotence of nature, that it cannot adhere to and exhibit the strictness of the Notion and runs wild in this blind irrational multiplicity [*begrifflose blinde Mannigfaltigkeit*]. We can *wonder* at nature's manifold genera and species and the endless diversity [*unendlichen Verschiedenheit*] of her formations, for wonderment is unreasoning [*ohne Begriff*] and its object the irrational [*Vernunftlose*]."[51] Against the rationalist interpretation, there are several moments in which Hegel contradicts quite explicitly any understanding of natural entities as emanations of the concept, instead insisting on nature's irrationality and contingency—which he calls its impotence (*Ohnmacht*). Individual entities in the finite natural world succumb to what he calls "unchecked contingency [*zügellose Zufälligkeit*]" and lack an immanent conceptual or rational determination: "In Nature, not only is the play of forms a prey to boundless and unchecked contingency, but each separate entity is without the Concept of itself."[52] It is this aspect of nature that is contrasted by Hegel with the self-determination and rationality of spirit. This is already a striking first distinction between Kant and Hegel—for Kant the natural world is inhospitable to the human because it is governed by universal

mechanical laws, while for Hegel it is because it is in some respects irrational and contingent—without the *Begriff*.

The non-metaphysical or post-Kantian readings appears to be correct in maintaining that even if Hegel reformulates it, he is still working mutatis mutandis within the Kantian distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity. The sphere of self-determination is set up in opposition to nature, which as we have seen is nature as the *other* of Spirit: "Such an other, determined as other, is physical nature; it is the other of spirit."[53] In contrast to the unchecked contingency and irrationality that is sometimes found in nature, conceptuality and self-consciousness is the sole property of the *Geistig* realm: "the Concept that is self-conscious and thinks pertains solely to Spirit."[54] But against the logical or transcendental mode of distinguishing *Natur* from *Geist*, the Hegelian strategy will involve identifying something in the *object* that makes it distinctive, that gives it a capacity or incapacity for self-determination. There are aspects of nature that are incomprehensible not only because of our incapacity to judge otherwise than through the universality of concepts. Nature's "very nature" is to withdraw from conceptual grasp, which for Hegel means that nature does not "live up" to conceptuality. Hegel distinguishes his own account from the more Kantian strategy in the following manner:

> Such an other, determined as other, is physical nature; it is the other of spirit. This its determination is thus at first a mere relativity by which is expressed, not a quality of nature itself, but only a relation external to it. However, since spirit is the true something and nature, consequently, in its own self is only what it is as contrasted with spirit, the quality of nature taken as such is just this, to be the other in its own self, that which is *external to itself* [*das Andere an ihr selbst, das* Außer-sich-Seiende].[55]

At first, to determine nature as incapable of raising itself to rational determination involves merely a relation between external conceptual determination and nature—our concepts are met with resistance when we attempt to conceptualize nature. Nature is irrational (or, perhaps, radically individual and contingent) only *relative to* the universalizing tendencies of human thought. This is the position that Pippin defends: "The truth about nature, about what nature is and what it isn't, isn't itself a manifestation of nature."[56] However, Hegel warns us not to remain in this position by adding a next step to this dialectic. In the second moment we must move to a view in which we understand this resistance or externality not as a logical mismatch between concepts and the infinite manifold, but as a quality of nature itself. When Hegel contrasts nature and spirit, what he means is that spirit is the realm in which conceptual self-determination is possible, while nature designates an entire

field of objectivity which is, by its very nature, external to itself: "Nature is not merely external in relation to this Idea (and to its subjective existence Spirit); the truth is rather that *externality* constitutes the specific character [*Bestimmung*] in which Nature, as Nature, exists."[57] It is not the generalizing tendencies of our concepts or the bounds of human experience that sets limits on our knowledge of nature, but it is actually nature that sets limits to philosophy: "This impotence of Nature sets limits to philosophy [*Jene Ohnmacht der Natur setzt der Philosophie Grenzen*]."[58] The distinction between the Kantian and the Hegelian approach becomes clear once one notices that it is not our conceptual schemes that are limiting our knowledge of nature, but nature's own resistance to conceptual grasp, which Hegel understand as nature's own incapacity (*Ohnmacht*).

So we have seen that on the one hand, Hegel continues to articulate the distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity opened up by Kant, even if rephrased as internality and externality, but on the other hand, he does so in a decidedly un-Kantian manner. One sense of nature in Hegel is this one: nature is the other of spirit, since it is by its very determination (*Bestimmung*) externality as such. Our concepts cannot adequately grasp the natural world because nature singularizes itself into multiplicities that defy perfect rational determination: "Nature everywhere [*allenthalben*] blurs the essential limits [*wesentlichen Grenzen*] of species and genera by intermediate and defective forms, which continually furnish counter examples to every fixed distinction."[59] However, this sense of nature, nature as externality, does not exhaust what Hegel means by nature, since leaving it at this standpoint would involve acknowledging an unbridgeable dichotomy between two ontological realms. Nature is not, for Hegel, globally irrational, since in it we find "traces of conceptual determination [*Spuren der Begriffsbestimmung*]."[60] Hegel's point is that we can conceptualize nature only in a limited manner, but our conceptual grasp can never completely determine the being of the natural entity under investigation, since "these traces do not exhaust its nature."[61] Nature is intelligible, but not exhaustively so. These traces of conceptual determination in nature are the manifestations of self-determination that are present at different ontological levels, but here the distinction between nature and spirit becomes more fluid and complex, or in the very least no longer involves a strict dichotomy. As Willem A. deVries has argued, "although he distinguishes nature and spirit, it would be a major mistake to think that that is the end of the matter."[62] Hegel attempts to articulate an understanding of the continuity and unity between nature and spirit, which will give us a more complete account of his position.

Even though it can be said that in the precise sense outlined above, nature is the externality of the concept, its outermost point and negation, there are also traces of conceptuality present throughout nature. Despite

accepting the distinction outlined above between nature and conceptuality, Hegel sees different ontological levels of nature as capable of conceptual self-determination and intelligibility to different degrees. These levels of conceptual self-determination allow for a passage or continuity between nature and spirit. At the lowest ontological level of intelligibility we have the inorganic realm, in which mechanical explanations generally dominate, a sphere in which nature is at its most "external." However, nature is able to organize itself to different degrees, and this ability of parts to join in self-organized wholes is already understood by Hegel as some form of pre-spiritual self-determination. This point is suggested by James Kreines at the end of his essay on "The Logic of Life," where he argues that Hegel does not subscribe to "organic monism" because he sees reality articulated into different *Stufen* or *Gattungen*: "Reality has a differentiated structure insofar as there are many different kinds or levels of phenomena which differ in real and important ways from biological phenomena and from one another."[63] Since both Kreines and deVries have argued elsewhere for ways of thinking about these different ontological levels, I will not go into detail here.[64] Suffice it to say for our purposes that Hegel understands nature as articulated at different levels of intelligibility, from the merely mechanical, to the chemical, magnetic, all the way to the organic, and that these degrees of intelligibility depend on the particular entity's capacity for self-organization. It might be helpful, following deVries,[65] to think of the "higher levels" as supervening on the "lower levels," so that while the chemical is also mechanical, it is not *merely* mechanical, and while the organic also involves chemical and mechanical reality, it simultaneously has organic self-organization that supervenes on its inorganic existence. While the language of supervenience or of emergent properties is certainly too anachronistic to do justice to Hegel's conceptual articulations, it does capture the way in which each of these *Gattungen* of reality are articulated in ontologically different ways. And in saying that the concept is implicit throughout nature, Hegel implies that these levels of self-organization are lower-order manifestations of the concept's self-unfolding.

Readers may become worried at this point that this description of nature as proto-conceptual returns us to the more philosophically extravagant positions of Hegel's idealism, implying both panlogicism and panpsychism (that everything is rational and everything is conceptual). Hegel at times appears to suggest that these different levels of self-organization, say, in a chemical reaction's tendency toward stability, the concept is already implicitly at work. Take, for example, his account of how a stone overcomes its own limitation: "The Concept which it is implicitly [*der Begriff, der er an sich ist*] contains the identity of the stone with its other. If it is a base capable of being acted on by an acid, then it can be oxidized, and neutralized, and so on. In oxidation, neutralization and so on, it overcomes its limitation of existing only

as a base, it transcends it."[66] It may appear that Hegel has contradicted his previous account of nature as lacking its own concept when he claims that something inorganic is implicitly the concept. However, to say that the concept is implicitly at work in nature does not imply that consciousness or self-consciousness is at work in the stone, since what Hegel means by the concept is not coextensive with what we would today mean by "conceptual." Hegel very clearly denies any form of sentience or sapience to the stone: "Because the stone does not think, does not even feel, its limitedness is not a limitation *for it*, that is, is not a negation in it for sensation, imagination, thought, etc., which it does not possess."[67] A stone cannot have the problems of consciousness and self-consciousness because it lacks the capacity for sensibility and thought, and thus the capacity to sense and know its limitations—this is related to that incapacity Hegel called the *Ohnmacht* of nature. Hegel's account of nature actually stresses the fact that thinking concepts must be imposed on inorganic matter, because not everything has its concept "within itself." For Hegel, it is only when self-consciousness is possible, only when the object thought and the object thinking coincide, that the concept can truly be self-determining: "A stone does not have this inconvenience; when it is to be thought or judged it does not stand in its own way. It is relieved from the burden of making use of itself for this task; it is something else outside it that must give itself this trouble."[68] In sum, to say that there are different levels of self-organization and intelligibility in nature is not to imply that there is some form of ideal consciousness manifesting itself in inorganic entities and making them what they are.

However, things become more complex when we move from the inorganic realm to the organic. A stone cannot have negative self-relation because it cannot even relate to itself, in any full sense of the term. Once the organic arises out of the inorganic, Hegel describes nature as capable of organizing itself and relating to itself through sentience, and once there is the capacity for negative self-relation, there is already an explicit (although not yet *fully* self-determining) manifestation of the concept:

> If, however, an existence contains the Concept not merely as an abstract in-itself, but as an explicit, self-determined totality, as instinct, life, ideation, etc., then in its own strength it overcomes the limitation and attains a being beyond it. The plant transcends the limitation of being a seed, similarly, of being blossom, fruit, leaf; the seed becomes the developed plant, the blossom fades away, and so on. The sentient creature, in the limitation of hunger, thirst, etc., is the urge to overcome this limitation and it does overcome it. It feels *pain*, and it is the privilege of the sentient nature to feel pain; it is a negation in its self [*es ist eine Negation in seinem Selbst*] and the negation is determined as a *limitation* in its

> feeling, just because the sentient creature has the feeling of its self, which is the totality that transcends this determinateness.[69]

The conceptual self-relation we get fully developed in self-consciousness is for Hegel already prefigured in other forms of negative self-relation, such as hunger, thirst, and pain. The capacity of organic, sentient beings to sense their own limitations puts them in a different "stage" than the inorganic world. For Hegel, the distinction between life and nonlife is arguably more important than any other distinction, since organic existence is the point at which the inorganic world reaches such a complex level of self-organization as to sublate itself and turn into Spirit. It is in life and organic nature in general that Hegel sees self-determination arising: "In nature life appears as the highest stage, a stage that nature's externality [*ihrer Äußerlichkeit*] attains by withdrawing into itself and sublating itself in subjectivity [*sich in der Subjektivität aufhebt*]."[70] Organic existence is not something imposed on nature as if from the outside, but something that nature attains by an immanent process of self-organization. The idea of life is therefore the point at which nature itself becomes spirit, in which subjectivity emerges out of the animal organism: "In the idea of life, subjectivity is the Concept, and it is thus in itself the absolute being-within-itself of actuality and concrete universality. Through the sublation of the immediacy of its reality just demonstrated, subjectivity has coalesced with itself, the last self-externality of Nature has been sublated and the Concept, which in Nature is present only in itself has become for itself."[71] Since what it means for the concept to arise out of its externality, to gain consciousness of itself, to be not merely in itself but also for itself, is what Hegel means by Geist, we have in the idea of life something like a limit between nature and spirit, or something that is both natural and beyond nature.

However, since the determinate character of nature was precisely its *incapacity* for immanent self-organization, Hegel understands this immanent development as a form of self-overcoming or self-sublation. Nature's externality, understood as its *capacity* for unbridled variation and multiplicity and *incapacity* for conceptual self-organization, is overcome by nature's own internalization toward life, consciousness, and finally subjectivity. Hegel gives us a passage from nature to the spiritual realm, which he calls nature's own self-sublation: "Nature, having reached this Idea from the starting point of its externality [*ihrer Äußerlichkeit*], transcends itself; its end does not appear as its beginning, but as its limit [*Grenze*], in which it sublates itself [*sich selbst aufhebt*]."[72] Difficulties can arise from the fact that Hegel is switching between two senses of nature. On the one hand, the determinate character of nature is externality as such, so the idea of life is already a limit to nature, already beyond nature and a work of spirit, on the other hand, nature is also this self-negation and self-overcoming, and thereby that which

is already implicitly spiritual. As is usually the case with dialectical thinking, Hegel wants to have it both ways: the very definition of nature and spirit involves their opposition to one another while *at the same time* there is no absolute gulf to be bridged between the two. Organic existence, and life in particular, is the fulcrum (or, if you will, the pineal gland) between these two positions:

> In *spirit*, however, life appears partly as opposed to it, partly as posited as at one with it, this unity being reborn as the pure offspring of spirit. For here life is to be taken generally in its proper sense as *natural life* [natürliches Leben], for what is called the *life of spirit* [Leben des Geistes] as spirit, is its peculiar nature that stands opposed to mere life [*ist seine Eigentümlichkeit, welche dem bloßen Leben gegenübersteht*]; just as we speak, too, of the *nature* of spirit, although spirit is not a natural being and is rather the opposite of nature [*der Gegensatz zur Natur ist*].[73]

Spirit is both something already happening in nature as the process of life, and something that stands opposed to "mere life," to mere *natural* life.

This duplicity of life, its being both opposed to spirit and at one with it, can be better explained by separating this speculative unity into its different moments. For Hegel, nature is that which by its very peculiar nature resists self-organization. However, parts of nature (the organic) are able to sublate this externality and raise themselves to the point of self-organizing and self-relating wholes. In this manner, nature has negated its peculiar character, and this negative self-relation is its elevation to a higher stage of existence. This process moves internally until, according to Hegel, it produces internal death, sentience, disease, and other signs of self-negating activity. Finally, it proceeds to become for-itself, producing self-sustaining universality and subjectivity. In saying that nature negates itself and rises above itself, Hegel is therefore utilizing two senses of nature: nature as negat*ed* is the nature qua externality, while the negat*ing* nature is already the work of self-organizing self-transcendence, and thus already the work of spirit. Since the "peculiar nature" of *Geist* is precisely to stand opposed to this mere natural existence, what has happened here is that in its negative self-relation *nature has become Geist*. Of course, it cannot know itself to have done just that, since merely organic life is not self-conscious, but for Hegel the Concept has already emerged at this ontological level: "Life, or organic nature, is the stage of nature [*Stufe der Natur*] at which the Concept emerges, but as blind, as unaware of itself and unthinking; the Concept that is self-conscious and thinks pertains solely to Spirit."[74] It becomes a matter of indifference whether one calls life's overcoming of inorganic nature a work of nature or of spirit, because it is simultaneously spirit and nature—the self-overcoming of nature

is nature's overcoming of itself and also the coming-to-be of spirit. The level or stage designated by life and the organic is both natural and spiritual, it "constitutes a *stage* [Stufe] of *nature* as well as of *spirit*."[75] It may initially appear that Hegel is contradicting himself, at times saying that nature as life is already spirit and at times saying that the life of spirit is opposed to nature. This is, as we have seen, because he is working with two distinct accounts of the relationship between nature and spirit—while the "peculiar nature" of *Geist* and *Natur* is their opposition, their actual immediate existence involves the passage from one to the other at various continuous levels. In the latter sense, the concept is at work everywhere, but it is at work to different degrees and in different ways, giving rise to different levels of intelligibility.

Because of this continuity, the same duplicity we have found in the concept of nature—nature as externality and nature as implicitly spiritual—is replicated within the realm of spirit. As we have seen Hegel claims that the peculiar nature of spirit is to stand opposed to mere natural life. However, spirit only becomes what it is through this negative relation to its own natural existence. Spirit arises out of nature as its condition, but does so by negating the natural within itself: "To begin with, human consciousness and will are immersed in their unmediated natural life [*in ihr unmittelbares natürliches Leben versenkt*]; their aim and object, at first, is the natural determination as such. But this natural determination comes to be infinitely demanding, strong and rich, because it is animated by Spirit. Thus Spirit, within its own self, stands in opposition to itself."[76] Hegel describes the development of human history as a gradual attempt to overcome the natural existence which is its condition and origin. This overcoming is described as a process of liberation—a liberation that Hegel once again presents as developing in different levels or stages: "World history presents the *stages* [Stufengang] in the development of the principle whose *content* is the consciousness of freedom."[77] The process is determined by spirit's immersion in its natural condition, and its gradual "tearing away" (*Losreißen*)[78] from its natural origin. The process of spirit's development is nothing but this movement, so that in a certain way spirit is nothing but the attempt to raise itself above its natural existence. From the standpoint of its process, it is always already dependent on this natural existence as its condition.

These different levels or stages of spirit's development can be singled out for scientific study. In its immediate existence within nature qua external, spirit is can be understood anthropologically: "*The Concept that is for itself* is necessarily also in *immediate existence*; in this substantial identity with life, as submerged in its externality [*Versenktsein in seine Äußerlichkeit*], it is the subject matter of *anthropology*."[79] Anthropology studies spirit in its identity to its own natural element, where "it lives as a natural spirit in *sympathy* with Nature."[80] Hegel here mentions all the unconscious and material

influences on the human mind, including not only dreams but also physical effects on "the brain, the heart, the ganglia, the liver, and so forth."[81] Once spirit reaches the level of consciousness, it estranges itself from its own natural existence *as if from an other*, and its entanglement with objectivity and otherness is the process Hegel identifies with the phenomenology of spirit: "This stage is the subject matter of the *phenomenology of spirit*—a science which stands midway between the science of natural spirit and spirit as such."[82] Once this otherness is internalized, that is, converted from its external existence and transformed into an otherness internal to Spirit, we get to the philosophy of spirit properly speaking.[83] These different levels of self-organization that Hegel describes at the end of the *Science of Logic* map quite adequately onto the philosophy of spirit as articulated in his Heidelberg encyclopedia. There, the anthropology first deals with the physical, feeling, and actual soul (§388-§412), then we move to the phenomenology of spirit (§413-§439), in which Spirit attains consciousness and self-consciousness, leading up to *Geist* both in its psychological and practical aspects (§440-§482) and finally to its objective existence in morality, laws, and ethical substance (§482-§552).[84] Even if Spirit's particular determination is to stand opposed to nature, this opposition is an activity in constant development. An investigation into these different levels of development shows how Spirit is continuous with nature, arises from nature, and is entangled with nature, even as it is historically attempting to liberate itself from this conditionality. This way of understanding Hegel's distinction between nature and spirit does not involve an unbridgeable dichotomy, but rather different levels continuously related to one another. Different parts of nature are conceptual to different degrees, and different parts of spirit are submerged within nature to different degrees. Moreover, there is a developmental account in which Spirit arises out of nature, even if in a process of negating nature.

LIFE AND FREEDOM, OR RECONCILING NATURAL AND HISTORICAL TELEOLOGY

In the above sections, I have attempted to establish that Hegel has the philosophical ambition of providing a holistic account of nature and world such that he expresses both the difference between nature and *Geist* and their identity. That means that within a partial perspective, there is some truth to the distinction between nature and spirit, but that this distinction ought not to result in an unbridgeable dichotomy. Rather, there is a gradational continuity between nature and Spirit, in that nature remains both a condition for Spirit's actualization and that against which the negative self-relation of Spirit develops. He therefore partially adopts Schelling's critique of Fichte, insisting that

nature is not reconciled by being determined merely as a not-I against which subjectivity strives, while remaining dissatisfied with Schelling's positioning of a *Naturphilosophie* that stands side-by-side a transcendental philosophy of subjectivity. Rather, as I have suggested in several different instances, Hegel's insight is that Spirit is a movement of self-actualization in such a manner that a developmental account is to be supplemented to the overly static position Schelling gave to the relationship between nature and subjectivity. This developmental account and the means of its actualization will be the subject of this section. By thinking through historical development and actualization, we will arrive at a richer understanding of the unity of nature and world, one that requires a reconciliation between natural teleology and historical teleology. This reconciliation is developed by thinking through the relationship between the domains of freedom and necessity (history and nature) through a rethinking of the continuity and unity between the concepts of freedom and life.

One straightforward manner in which to characterize Hegel's position here is that he must undertake the task to reconcile Aristotle and Kant on teleology, by somehow preserving what he sees as Aristotle's truly speculative account of the soul with what is true (if partially so) of Kantian subjectivity. As he states in the *Encyclopedia*, when introducing a general conception of *Geist*, "the books of Aristotle on the Soul, along with his discussions on its special aspects and states, are for this reason still by far the most admirable, perhaps even the sole, work of philosophical value on this topic."[85] One way in which Aristotle is able to answer the question of what the soul (or, in Hegel's terms, *Geist*) is or ought to be, is by reference to the purposiveness of all things in nature. Take, for example, the famous argument in book 1, chapter 7, of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[86] If we are after the final end or purpose (telos) of human flourishing, or how to characterize such human flourishing, we can have recourse to the idea that there is a particular work (*ergon*) of a human being: "perhaps this would come to pass if the work of the human being [*to ergon tou anthropou*] should be grasped."[87] Aristotle then wonders whether or not there is a proper work of the human, such as there would be of a carpenter or a shoemaker, using crafts (*technai*) as his preferred paradigms. Then, surprisingly shifting his example from crafts to natural organs with proper functions, he asks what appears to be only a rhetorical question for him: "Or just as there appears to be a certain work of the eye, hand, and foot, and in fact of each of the parts in general, so also might one posit a certain work of a human being apart from all these?"[88] Without giving an argument as to why there would be a proper function or work of the human, he goes on to try to determine what it is. It cannot be mere nutrition and growth, since these are functions that the human shares with other living beings, including both animals and plants. It cannot be sense perception either, since this is

shared by both human and nonhuman animals. Finally, Aristotle lands on a "certain active life of that which possesses reason (*de praktike tis tou logon echontos*)"[89] as the singularly human function upon which one can rely for determining how to properly characterize human flourishing. This argument, of course, relies on the broader conviction that beings of nature have final purposes, and that nature does not do anything in vain or simply by chance. It did not by chance come upon the configuration and capacities present in the human soul, and attention to those purposes and functions can help us better understand how to actualize our potentials.

While Hegel has great admiration for Aristotle's account of the different levels and stratifications of the soul (nutritive, perceptive, and rational), he cannot simply rely on this account for *Geist*, as it would be tantamount to claiming that *Geist* has a predetermined nature, and that by understanding its nature one can understand what it would mean for its full development and actualization to take place. As we have seen, in certain important respects "spirit is not a natural being and is rather the opposite of nature [*der Gegensatz zur Natur ist*]."[90] While spirit has a natural basis, as described in the account of organic life in his anthropology and his psychology, it historically comes into its own by separating itself from this natural basis. Spirit is an identity with itself in its otherness, and comes to truly be itself only insofar as it has sublated its submergence within this natural basis: "In this its truth nature is vanished, and Spirit has resulted as the 'Idea' entered on possession of itself . . . thus at the same time it is this identity only so far as it is a return out of nature [*nur als Zurückkommen aus der Natur*]."[91] Therefore, against Aristotle, Hegel must maintain some form of the Kantian dichotomy between nature as the realm of necessity and Spirit as the realm of freedom, with the latter developing historically rather than simply actualizing itself in a natural teleological manner. This aspect of the dichotomy is especially clear in the metaphor he chooses to use when attempting to define Spirit in his introduction to *The Philosophy of History*: "Just as the essence of matter is gravity, so the essence of Spirit is its freedom. . . . Matter has weight insofar as it strives toward a central point outside itself. . . . Spirit, on the other hand, is that which has its center in itself."[92] He also contrasts the cyclical constancy of nature to the developmental and historical perfectibility found in Spirit: "In nature, one and the same stable pattern reveals itself, and all change reverts to it. Humanity on the other hand, has an actual capacity for change, and change for the better, a drive toward *perfectibility* [*ein Trieb der* Perfektibilität]."[93] So there is no question here of returning to a simple natural teleology, in which the very natural function of spirit, or its purpose within nature, is able to determine what spirit is. What spirit *is* becomes inseparably bound with what Spirit *becomes*, with what it makes of itself, as a historical achievement: "The vocation of spirit is to make itself be what it is in itself."[94]

Another reason that Hegel cannot simply return to an Aristotelian teleology is that the modern natural sciences, as I described them in beginning of the book, largely dismissed the enchanted and teleological view of nature in favor of a mechanistic model of efficient, rather than final, causes. This modern alternative allows for a very different form of reconciliation between the natural and the human domain, namely, by completely denying any teleological account and thoroughly naturalizing the human realm through recourse to the new view of nature developed in the modern natural sciences. Spinoza offers a paradigmatic case of this project of naturalization,[95] hoping to expose the ways in which all teleological thinking is the result of prejudice: "Now all the prejudices turn on this one point, the widespread belief among men that all things in Nature are like themselves in acting with an end in view."[96] This naturalizing project has first of all the negative and critical goal of exposing the fact that "all final causes are but figments of the human imagination,"[97] together with the positive project of giving an account of the human realm as perfectly compatible with and no different from the natural domain investigated by mathematical physics. In Spinoza's infamous words, the goal is to "consider human actions and appetites just as if it were an investigation into lines, planes, or bodies."[98] This project of naturalization would not only undermine teleological thinking about natural organisms, but criticize its use within the human historical domain. This, as is clear by now, is not something Hegel is willing to do, since he will repeatedly insist throughout his writings that "reason is *purposive activity* [*die Vernunft das* zweckmäßige Tun *ist*]."[99] One obvious option at this point would be to establish some kind of dualism between the realm of nature, in which necessity and efficient causes maintain their explanatory role, and a historical and teleological domain wherein freedom and purposiveness reigns. This option would be exemplified by the various forms of dualism I will be investigating in the next historical interlude, where the dichotomy between the historical and the natural become the inheritor concepts of the dualism described by Kant in the Third Antinomy. But it should be clear by now that Hegel will not settle for such a dualism, maintaining the demand for holistic and monistic reconciliation.

A third option between ancient naturalism (Aristotle) and a modern naturalism (Spinoza) can be said to be opened up by Kant through his conception of reflective judgment. We saw that Kant largely agreed with the new modern reassessment of nature in terms of mechanism, but that agreement left him with the problem of how to think about the self-organization found in living organisms, a problem which he took up in the "Critique of Teleological Judgment" section of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.[100] Kant was deeply aware of the fact that a universal mechanism of nature seems insufficient for accounting for at least one portion of the entities in nature, and that, pace Descartes, life is not properly determined by mechanism and animals are not simply

complex machines: "For it is quite certain that we can never adequately come to know the organized beings and their internal possibility in accordance with merely mechanical principles of nature."[101] But Kant's solution, as is well known, is to make teleological judgments only subjectively necessary in the instances of living beings by differentiating between a mere *reflecting* power of judgment and a *determining* power of judgment. Nature is still determined by the understanding as a universally causal domain in which necessity reigns, but "because of the peculiar constitution of my cognitive faculties"[102] I am cognitively compelled to treat some self-organizing beings as if they were determined through intentions and purposes. It is an understatement to assert that Hegel is not impressed by Kant's solution to the problem of life through teleological judgments that are merely reflective and subjective, stating that "this whole standpoint fails to examine the sole question to which philosophic interest demands an answer, namely, which of the two principles possesses truth in and for itself."[103] The real question is whether mechanism or teleology govern nature, that is, whether Descartes, Spinoza, and Boyle are correct in their explanations through efficient causes or whether Aristotle was on the right track with a teleological account of nature.

None of the options that we have described above will satisfy Hegel. According to him, we cannot simply ignore the advent of natural science and Kantian critical philosophy and return naively to an Aristotelian position. Neither ought we to give in to the naturalizing and to some extent reductionistic projects found in Descartes, Spinoza, and Hobbes. Dualism is out of the question, and the Kantian solution of a subjective grounding for teleological thinking does not suffice either, since it both sidesteps the real question and relies on an overly subjective form of idealism.[104] What, then, is Hegel's alternative? I want to suggest in what follows that if we look closely first at Hegel's account of the telos of spirit, of its purposive activity, we will be able to see how it already is at work in the realm of nature, albeit in an immediate form, in the activity that Hegel calls life or living. The goal or purpose of spirit in its historical development is, put simply, "freedom and assurance of its self-knowledge."[105] This twofold goal is described in several ways throughout Hegel's works. Freedom is a kind of autonomy, self-determination, and self-sufficiency: "Spirit is autonomous and self-sufficient, a Being-by-itself (*Bei-sich-selbst-sein*)."[106] However, this self-sufficiency is further specified as a kind of self-relation that involves the drive to self-consciousness and self-knowledge: "This self-sufficient being is self-consciousness [*Dieses Beisichselbstsein des Geistes ist Selbstbewußtsein*], the consciousness of self."[107] But spirit cannot be conscious of itself as free without the actualization and development of freedom throughout history, which means that the process of self-consciousness and the process of the actualization of freedom are deeply intertwined: "In self-consciousness the two—subject and

object—coincide. Spirit knows itself: it is the judging of its own nature, and at the same time it is the activity of coming to itself, of producing itself, making itself actually what it is in itself potentially."[108] Here we see Hegel using explicitly Aristotelian formulations in order to account of the movement from the potentiality of freedom to its actualization throughout history. There is no doubt regarding the *teleological* structure of this historical development: "*The final goal of the world* [der Endzweck der Welt] we said, is Spirit's consciousness of its freedom, and hence also the actualization of that very freedom."[109] It is, however, a strange kind of teleology, since there is no necessitation in the relationship between potentiality and actuality—it cannot be a simple development of its *nature* through inward *necessity*, which would make such a development precisely not free.

The tension between freedom and teleology is present in several of Hegel's formulations. As cited above, the movement from potentiality to actuality is a kind of *making* of oneself or a *producing* of oneself, and the modern constructivist language is used side-by-side with the ancient teleological formulations: "it is the activity of coming to itself, of producing itself, making itself actually what it is in itself potentially [*die Tätigkeit, zu sich zu kommen und so sich hervorzubringen, sich zu dem zu machen, was er an sich ist*]."[110] Spirit is simultaneously free, and is therefore not necessitated—it is only what it makes of itself and what it takes itself to be, while somehow being an actualization of what it always already was in itself or potentially: "spirit is only what it makes of itself, and it makes itself into what it already is implicitly."[111] We clearly see that Hegel wants to hold on to both of these formulations as involving no contradiction, and uses the language of an actualization of a potential together with the more constructivist language of self-making: "It is the essence of Spirit to act, to make itself explicitly into what it already is implicitly—to be its own deed, and its own work [*zu seiner Tat, zu seinem Werk*]."[112] What, then, is the work of spirit? It makes itself free through a kind of negative self-relation by negating that which is immediate and given: "its activity is the transcending of what is immediately there, by negating it and returning into itself."[113] Spirit finds itself burdened by a great deal of conditions, both natural and historical, and these impinge upon it as limits to its freedom and its self-relation. The development of history is a constant unburdening of spirit's internal dependencies, and this process of unburdening takes on the character of a negative self-relation. This developmental process is described by Hegel as involving roughly three different stages: first, there is an "immersion of Spirit in natural life," secondly there is an "initial tearing away from nature [that is] is incomplete and only partial," and finally an "elevation of Spirit out of this still particular form of freedom into its pure universality—into self-consciousness."[114] Hegel often calls the second stage "finite Spirit," and the final one infinite or absolute spirit.

What we see in these three stages is a very precise logic of *negative self-relation*.[115] Hegel puts this extremely abstractly through several different articulations, but it is clear that the concept of negative self-relation is some version of the "identity of identity and difference" problem we discussed before. Sometimes he expresses it in terms that are close to Schelling's reformulation of Fichtean subjectivity, stating that "this identity, being absolute negativity, is absolute difference."[116] He uses the same language to define Spirit in the *Encyclopedia*: "Here the subject and object of the Idea are one—either is the intelligent unity, the notion. This identity is absolute negativity."[117] In the following section he uses the same exact language to define freedom: "Liberty: i.e., the absolute negativity of the concept as identity with itself [*die absolute Negativität des Begriffes als Identität mit sich*]."[118] In the *Science of Logic* he identifies this logic of negative self-relation with the concept, arguing that it is nothing other than Kant's transcendental unity of apperception, if properly understood to include both the moment of self-identity ("the I is, *first*, this pure self-related unity"[119]) and the moment of negativity ("secondly, the I as self-related negativity"[120]). This logic of negative self-relation is nothing other than Hegel's most abstractly formulated understanding of movement, development, or actualization. As we have seen, Hegel took Schelling's challenge to Kantian and Fichtean transcendental idealism seriously, but complained that it remained too formal and lacked a notion of development that would allow for a genuine passage between the natural and the transcendental spheres. The process of negative self-relation is an answer to such a problem of relating the natural to the subjective, and allows not only for a reconnecting between the philosophy of nature and transcendental idealism, but offers an account of a principle that is active in both spheres. Here is a less abstract account of this process as described in one of his lecture courses: "This is the concept of development—a wholly universal concept. It is *life* and movement as such. . . . This is the *Idea's* being with itself, the capacity to revert into itself, to coincide with its other and yet to be at home with itself in the other. This capacity, this power, to be at home with oneself in the negative of oneself is also the *freedom* of man."[121] This being-at-home-with-itself-in-otherness provides the perfect metaphor for negative self-relation. One is simultaneously related to an other, but still remains identical to oneself insofar as such a relation is absolute negativity. Notice, moreover, that this passage offers us a clue as to why the logic of negative self-relation would be the key to reconciling the natural and the spiritual domains. Hegel here identifies it not only with the idea, the highest concept of Hegelian philosophy, but simultaneously with *life* and *freedom*. Hegel makes it explicit that if one takes a general and abstract enough perspective, the

movement and development present in nature under the category of life and in spirit under the category of freedom are not different in kind.

This identity becomes more evident if we turn to the section on "Life" in the *Science of Logic*. My goal here will not be to explicate the concept of life in detail or to show its systematic import in the *Logic* and in Hegel's philosophy in general, as this has recently been done in an exhaustive manner by Karen Ng.[122] Rather, I will attempt to draw out the ways in which life already displays, in immediate form, the logic of negative self-relation that is at play also in the realm of spirit through the self-actualization of freedom. Hegel calls life simply "the immediate idea."[123] It is a higher and more complex development of the concept's relationship to objectivity, which had just been articulated through mechanism, chemism, and teleology. Life is a process in which self-identity is somehow maintained, even while it remains in a relationship to its objectivity as a means or a condition: "Life: the Concept that, distinguished from its objectivity, simple within itself, pervades its objectivity and, as its own end, possesses its means in the objectivity and posits the latter as its means, yet is immanent in this means and is therein the realized end that is identical with itself."[124] We see here the logic of negative self-relation in embryonic form, so to speak: life is teleologically related to itself—it is its own end, but is so by subjugating its organic conditions as a means. It somehow remains itself while maintaining a relationship to an other of itself, but is in a negative relationship to such an internal externality. Hegel is clear, however, that he is not speaking directly, at this point, of actual empirical living organisms found in nature, but rather, the "logical view of life."[125] While life is at work in both the philosophy of nature and in the philosophy of spirit in their concrete and finite manifestations, here Hegel is "differentiating logical life as pure Idea from natural life which is dealt with in the *philosophy of nature*, and from life in so far as it stands in connection with *spirit*."[126] In an extremely abstract and dense paragraph, Hegel describes this logical notion of life as a kind of simple self-referring universality that remains in relation to itself while maintaining a negative relation to the manifoldness in which it abides. Hegel therefore breaks up the concept of life into the three moments of the concept: universality, particularity, and singularity. Life is at first "absolute universality" and a form of "simple self-relation."[127] However, this universality and self-relation is not a static one, but is rather described in its second moment as an *urge* or an *impulse*: "it is the *urge* [Trieb], and moreover the *specific urge*, of the *particular* difference, and no less essentially the one and universal urge of the specialized difference that reduces this its particularization into unity and maintains it therein."[128] By maintaining a negative relation to its particularization (by "reducing" it into unity), it is also in the third instance a singularity that is only self-related through its urge to return to

itself from its estrangement: "It is only as this *negative unity* of its objectivity and particularization that life is a self-related life that is for itself, a soul. As such it is essentially an individual, which relates itself to objectivity as to an other, to a nonliving nature."[129]

In the following sections Hegel becomes more concrete regarding his concept of life, trying to show how this threefold process of negative self-relation is manifest in the living organism, in the process of life, and in the reproduction of a species or a genus (*Gattung*). In the living individual, one sees this process of self-relation displayed through sensibility and a feeling of self. The organism is sentient insofar as it is not simply causally responsive to its environment or to its parts and organs, but can feel that those things that impinge upon it are actually impinging upon its *self*. Sensibility is, in other words, already a form of self-relation, in which one not only feels as an absolute receptivity, but feels oneself feeling, or is sentient of the feeling as internal to oneself: "Sensibility may therefore be regarded as the determinate being of the inwardly existent soul, since it receives all externality into itself, while reducing it to the perfect simplicity of self-similar universality."[130] The individual animal organism has, for Hegel, already a kind of proto-subjectivity, a kind of inwardness that is exemplified in its internal feelings and impulses: "Feeling is just this omnipresence of the unity of the animal in all its member which immediately communicate every impression to the one whole which, in the animal, is an incipient being-for-self. It follows from this subjective inwardness, that the animal is self-determined, from within outwards, not merely from outside, that is to say, it has an urge and instinct."[131] The animal cannot simply be understood as a complex machine that responds to stimulus in a causal manner reminiscent of other complexes in nature. Rather, the animal already has proto-subjectivity in its feeling as both inwardness and self-relation, and a relative autonomy and freedom from its environment, insofar as it does not simply respond to stimuli but initiates action from within itself. Hegel goes so far as to suggest not only an "incipient" or proto-being-for-self of the animal organism, but speaks unqualifiedly of "the subjectivity of the animal [*Die Subjektivität des Tieres*]."[132] This means at the very least that the animal organism does not fit within an understanding of nature determined as a sphere of necessity, as simply the "other" of spirit.

The life-process, moreover, exemplifies how this simple self-relation of feeling and sentience is in contradiction with objectivity and externality, namely, that there is an urge to overcome contradiction in need, hunger, and pain. The living individual is "its own end [*Selbstzweck*]" for which the "external world has the value only of something negative."[133] The living individual feels the contradiction between itself and its environment negatively, as need and pain, which Hegel evocatively calls "the prerogative [*das*

Vorrecht] of living natures."[134] In the urge that living creatures feel, in their need, hunger, thirst, and pain, we find the initial, and therefore immediate, forms of negativity which can then take on higher and more cognitive and reflective modes. This urge is therefore designated by Hegel as a unique "privilege" or "prerogative" (*Vorrecht*): "It is the privilege [*Vorrecht*] of the sentient nature to feel pain; it is a negation in its self [*es ist eine Negation in seinem Selbst*] and the negation is determined as a *limitation* in its feeling, just because the sentient creature has the feeling of its self, which is the totality that transcends this determinateness."[135] The life process in the sentient organism then in turn responds negatively to such a prerogative, by attempting to appropriate and assimilate such an externality and to thereby restore the individual to its homeostatic self-relation. In an animal's need and urge, one finds a negativity that is both negatively related to itself and to an other of itself. The life-process involves an attempt at resolution by subjugating the other and making it a means for itself by turning the object into a moment of a larger teleological activity. The individual maintains itself as the end of the teleological process, but places the object in the position of a means: "With the seizure [*Bemächtigung*] of the object, therefore, the mechanical process passes over into the inner process by which the individual appropriates the object in such a manner as to deprive it of its peculiar nature, convert it into a means for itself, and give its own subjectivity to it for substance."[136] The living sentient being, it can be said, already has the urge toward freedom, and responds to this urge by attempting to appropriate its material conditions, primarily through *physical* forms of consumption and appropriation.

The highest form of negative self-relation to which life, as the immediate idea, attains, is the reproduction of its own species (*Gattung*). While hunger, thirst, and need are urges that attempt to restore an individual organism's self-relation, copulation and reproduction are therefore specific kinds of urges that, because of their production of universality, point the individual beyond themselves to the replication of their species. The singularity of the species is a kind of unification of universality and particularity: "But this *urge* of the genus [*Gattung*] can realize itself only by sublating the single individualities which are still particular relatively to one another."[137] In the unity of the sexes for the production of a new individual of its species, Hegel thinks that nature has simultaneously reached its limit and its highest manifestation: "The sexual relation is, therefore, the highest point of animate Nature."[138] His account makes it seem as if nature were trying to produce genuine universals, something that can only be done satisfactorily by thought and cognition, but fails to do so adequately by again reproducing another individual. It is at this point that Hegel presents the passage of life from nature to spirit, by showing that the highest point of nature is a kind of self-sublation, by which

it transcends itself immanently: "Nature, having reached this Idea from the starting point of its externality, transcends itself; its end does not appear as its beginning, but as its limit, in which it sublates itself."[139] Nature is an urge to be free together with an internal incapacity to truly rise up to the challenge of freedom. Life then points us to Spirit and to what can be called "second nature," or in Hegel's theological language, a second birth: "In spirit, however, life appears partly opposed to it, partly as posited as at one with it, this unity being reborn as the pure offspring of spirit."[140]

We therefore arrive at the reconciliation we demanded between natural teleology and historical or spiritual teleology, neither by accepting the mechanistic account of nature, nor reverting to a straightforward Aristotelian teleology, nor by accepting teleological thinking as a mere subjective requirement as in Kant. While it may be Aristotelian insofar as it accepts constitutive teleological principles, it is Kantian in the sense that the teleological principle at work throughout is *freedom*, understood as negative self-relation.[141] Nature, in its highest formations embodied by living organisms, is an urge toward freedom, toward remaining at home with oneself in one's other. Nature is incapable of successfully attaining such freedom, hence the *impotence* of nature, but it is one and the same principle that is at work in natural teleology and in historical teleology, albeit in different forms. The activity by which spirit makes a home for itself in the world is in some respects similar to those of organic life. To shield ourselves from the elements, we make houses. In order to be unburdened of our bodily needs and desires, we produce an entire arsenal of production and exchange called the economy. In order to regulate our systems of interdependence, we organize ourselves into cities and finally states. All these are processes of appropriation and assimilation that are different in degree, but not in kind, from those found when beavers construct dams and wolves hunt in packs. Compare the appropriation and assimilation of the life-process to Hegel's more explicit description of spirit: "This triumph over externality which belongs to the concept of Spirit, is what we have called the ideality of Spirit. Every activity of Spirit is nothing but a distinct mode of reducing what is external to the inwardness which Spirit itself is, and it is only by this reduction, by this idealization or assimilation [*Idealisierung oder Assimilation*], of what is external that it becomes and is Spirit."[142] It is certainly true that something radically different appears to take place once self-consciousness, thought, and what in this passage Hegel calls ideality, enters the picture. For Hegel, it is only within this domain that true freedom is attainable. But even while stressing this difference, one must remember that subjectivity, negative self-relation, and the urge toward freedom were already built into nature in the concept of life. Ideality and self-consciousness are nothing more than higher forms of that very negative self-relation, they are the mediated form of the idea, as opposed to the immediate idea that is life.

CONTINGENCY: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE IDEA

Up to this point, I have been primarily expounding on and analyzing Hegel's attempt to reconcile the realm of nature to the realm of historical spirit into one, overarching view of the whole of reality. In the final section of this chapter, I hope to begin to assess Hegel's success in incorporating nature and in satisfying reason's holistic impulses. At stake here is the successful explanatory function of the highest concept of Hegel's philosophy, namely, the Idea. The Hegelian Idea articulates itself in a tripartite relationship: first, the logical idea, second, the idea as it is manifest in nature, and finally its return from nature in finite and then absolute spirit. In the first manifestation, the Idea is pure of its empirical admixture to natural and historical circumstances, or, as Hegel puts it in the famous metaphor in the introduction to the *Science of Logic*, "God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and finite spirit."[143] In the second manifestation of the Idea as nature, it displays itself as externality, or "Nature has presented itself as the Idea in the form of otherness [*in der Form des Andersseins*]."[144] Finally, in spirit the idea comes to have a mediated form of negative self-relation, and comes to itself out of its estrangement in nature: "In this its truth Nature is vanished, and Spirit has resulted as the 'Idea' entered on possession of itself."[145] This means that the idea has somehow incorporated or comprehended nature in a mediate way, and no longer has anything true or essential outside of itself. The idea, which Hegel defines as the unity of the concept with reality, is a determination of all being elevated into the form of truth. It is a superlative unity between what truly *is* and what is *true*—between the ontological and the veridical: "The Idea being the unity of the Concept and reality, *being* has attained the significance of truth; therefore what now *is* is only what is Idea."[146] The question we will be asking in what follows is whether or not the idea is an adequate expression of the reconciliation of the human historical world with nature, and to what extent Hegel's holistic vision seems satisfactory.

It is well-known that complaints about the adequacy of the idea in truly fulfilling the unity between the concept and reality are a perennial concern in the reception of Hegel's philosophy. Schelling was the first to fully articulate the most prevalent criticism, namely, that Hegel's philosophy is a type of monstrous rationalism in which all of reality is inappropriately assimilated by being logicized or rationalized by the Idea. According to this critique, what is eliminated in the process is precisely what ought to be called reality—real existence, actual events and occurrences, contingencies found in nature and in history. This elimination of that which really exists is a mark of what Schelling in his Berlin lectures calls *negative philosophy*, which he identifies with the purely rationalistic and idealistic trajectory within modern

philosophy. In his late period, Schelling came to identify the critical and transcendental philosophy of both Kant and Fichte with a one-sided philosophical endeavor:

> Reason is above all called upon to become a science that removes and eliminates the mere contingencies of that immediate content, that is, to become a critical science (every elimination is a critique), or, because it removes, to become a negative science. Such a science shows itself from the very start as a descendent of the so-called critical philosophy, as the consequence of the standpoint philosophy obtains through Kant's critique of reason.[147]

Critical philosophy is negative philosophy insofar as it eliminates the contingent ontological genesis of that which exists in order to focus on the quiddity or "whatness" that is determined by reason. Alternatively, the project of positive philosophy would be able to comprehend the contingent "that it is" of things without grounding it in the concept. Schelling's famous criticism of Hegel is not simply that the Hegelian system remains within the Kantian-Fichtean circumscribed realm of negative philosophy, but that it attempts to include real existence by using the purely negative methods of idealism, thus becoming a negative philosophy *masquerading* itself as positive: "The philosophy that Hegel presented is the negative driven beyond its limits: it does not exclude the positive, but thinks it has subdued it within itself."[148] For Schelling, Hegel can only claim absoluteness by systematically *including* every determination, but he simultaneously can only claim rational systematicity by *excluding* or eliminating contingent existence. Hegel's ingenious solution is, as we have seen, to *include* finite and contingent otherness but to include it *as self-excluding*, that is, to include it as that which sublates itself. Schelling's complaint is that this does not due justice to the true existence of that which is outside the concept, since it only includes that which is rational and true, which it does by subsuming being itself into veritable and rationally determinate being. Schelling, however, is committed to the idea that "there is obviously something other and something more than mere reason in the world."[149]

Some version of the criticism levelled by Schelling can be found periodically throughout the history of philosophy, first in Feuerbach,[150] then most famously in Kierkegaard,[151] and more recently in Adorno's work.[152] The criticism is neither that Hegel's philosophy is simply totalizing in that it includes all of reality within a system, nor that it is incomplete insofar as it leaves out contingent existence from within that totality. Rather, these thinkers all complain about the manner in which the incorporation of contingent existence takes place. As Schelling has it, Hegel's is a rational and negative philosophy driven beyond its limits—it takes itself to include reality, but does

so only by subsuming it into a rational system that cannot truly accommodate it. The Idea is meant to include all that is true, and to include it in a manner that renders it rational: "*Something possesses truth only in so far as it is Idea. . . .* In this sense the Idea is the *rational*; it is the unconditioned."[153] If we are to assess these criticisms, we must move beyond simply asserting that Hegel includes the contingent within his philosophical system (which he does), or that he systematically excludes or eliminates the contingent in favor of an absolutely necessary rational system. Rather, we must turn to the *manner* in which Hegel incorporates contingency within the Idea in order to see whether such an incorporation is able to satisfy the worry of these commentators. The notion of contingency is central to this problem insofar as it is the Idea's most "external" manifestation—it is, so to speak, the other side of the idea.[154] Due to the fact that contingency reigns within many aspects of nature (though not all, of course), and that spirit, in its finite manifestation, is still in a relationship to the contingency of nature, an understanding of how contingency functions within Hegel's philosophy will help us evaluate the success of the reconciliation between nature and spirit within Hegel's holism.

Following Dieter Henrich's article "Hegel's Theorie über den Zufall"[155] which argued persuasively for the necessity of contingency in Hegel's *Science of Logic*, several commentators have further stressed the way in which the logic of contingency offers a systematic openness internal to Hegel's supposedly closed system.[156] By examining the category of contingency in the *Science of Logic*, it can been shown that for Hegel there is a need to recognize the role of contingency within any rational and categorical reconstruction of reality, and that contingency is a necessary concept within his ontology. From within the *Science of Logic*, Hegel maintains that the formal notion of contingency (*Zufälligkeit*) oscillates between two different and unstable meanings. The first logical sense of contingency involves determining something as simultaneously actual and possible: "This unity of possibility and actuality is *contingency*. The contingent is an actual that is at the same time possible."[157] Something is contingent if it is actual, but in such a way that it is simultaneously *merely possible*—it could have been otherwise. This sense of contingency is therefore closely tied to the logical concept of possibility—only if something could possibly not have been, or been otherwise, is it contingent and not necessary. Contingency is here understood as "contingent-upon" or "dependent-upon" external conditions since it could have been otherwise if other conditions were present. At the same time, Hegel claims that the contingent has been understood as that which is not necessarily determined by another, as that which "has no ground [*keinen Grund*]" or is "groundless [*Grundloses*]."[158] In this sense the meaning of contingency is closer to that of chance or irrationality, wherein something happens not simply based on *external* grounds, but in some significant sense *without* a reason or ground

(*Grund*). Hegel claims that these two meanings of contingency are not stable, that there is an ambiguity between them insofar as the first claims that something is contingent because it is dependent on an external ground, while the second implies that it is contingent because it has no ground. This ambiguity arises from the fact that to have an "external" ground (to be grounded in another) is to not have a ground of one's own, and thereby to be groundless in a limited sense. Hegel maintains that there is a contradiction in the formal conception of contingency insofar as it wavers between these two senses: "The contingent, then, has no ground because it is contingent; and equally, it has a ground because it is contingent."[159]

However, in addition to this *logical* category of contingency, whose predominant meaning is the contingent as that which is dependent on an external ground or condition, Hegel introduces the notion of the *contingency of nature* understood as nature's irrationality and chance-like multiplicity. This second meaning of contingency is, as I have argued in more detail elsewhere,[160] different from the logical or categorical sense and should be designated as a *pre-categorical* sense of contingency. While Hegel uses the logical sense of contingency as a way to *include* contingency within his logical system, the pre-categorical sense is actually used to *exclude* certain aspects of reality from rational determination. This latter sense is the one he designates as the impotence, incapacity, or powerlessness of nature (*Ohnmacht der Natur*), and this sense of contingency implies that there are irrational and chance-like products in the world, ones that cannot be rationally grounded, even grounded rationally *as irrational*.[161] A great deal of evidence can be found spread throughout Hegel's writings indicating that he did not believe in the complete rationality of nature. Although Hegel contends that there are varying degrees of rationality in specific aspects of nature (in his words, there are "traces of Conceptual determination [*Spuren der Begriffsbestimmung*]"[162]), he admits that the multiplicity of forms and manifestations of natural products and events betray the fundamental contingency of the natural sphere. This contingency does not simply carry the meaning of dependence and conditionality, but of something that is chance-like, accidental, or even irrational:

> This is the impotence of nature [*Ohnmacht der Natur*], that it cannot adhere to and exhibit the strictness of the notion and runs wild in this blind irrational multiplicity [*begrifflose blinde Mannigfaltigkeit*]. We can *wonder* at nature's manifold genera and species and the endless diversity [*unendlichen Verschiedenheit*] of her formations, for wonderment is unreasoning [*ohne Begriff*] and its object the irrational [*Vernunftlose*].[163]

This striking claim about the "impotence of nature" involves a portrayal of nature's inability to completely appear in the form of rationality and determinacy.

The diversity in nature is linked to its multiplicity (*Mannifgaltigkeit*) and endless differentiation (*unendlichen Verschiedenheit*).

Whenever Hegel speaks about this *Ohnmacht* (powerlessness, incapacity, or impotence), he seems to be claiming a much more radical sense of contingency than the one dealt with in the *Science of Logic*'s chapter on actuality. Here the claim is not simply that a natural product, effect, or event is dependent on a prior condition, but that it is thoroughly irrational. This sense of contingency involves understanding natural products and events as radically accidental and random, as without any reason whatsoever: "In Nature, not only is the play of forms a prey to boundless and unchecked contingency [*zügellose Zufälligkeit*], but each separate entity is without the Notion of itself."[164] Characteristically, Hegel does not have the highest esteem for this form of irrationality and randomness, and believes that a type of un-conceptual wonder is the only real response we can have to its manifestation. Nevertheless, this irrational mode of contingency is not identical to the mediated contingency found in the categorical treatment of contingency. Hegel is very clear that reason cannot prove, deduce, or construct the irrational products of nature, precisely because they are irrational, and that this fact actually sets limits to philosophy itself: "This impotence of Nature sets limits to philosophy [*Jene Ohnmacht der Natur setzt der Philosophie Grenzen*] and it is quite improper to expect the Notion to comprehend—or as it is said, construe or deduce—these contingent products of Nature."[165] The self-limitation of reason found in the logic is different from the form of limitation found in the philosophy of nature. The latter limit is set not by reason positing its own negative limit, but is set by the irrationality of nature itself. While Hegel may not admit of this language, it appears that there are two different types of limits for philosophy corresponding to these two senses of contingency, one set by reason itself in determining its own limits, and one set by nature's irrationality thereby limiting reason's comprehension of natural products. Reason cannot ground the irrational in nature without undermining precisely what makes it truly irrational, since to ground such irrationality in reason would undermine precisely what it is. Therefore, while Hegel does *include* the category of contingency within the Idea, he also must *exclude* the radical contingency of real natural objects from rational comprehension.

Hegel's position on nature can appear quite paradoxical, since it is precisely the exceptions and deviations from the "essential" that he takes to be manifestations of what is "essential" to this sphere of nature. In many ways, what is "normal" is described precisely by what deviates from the norm; the "intermediate products" and "deformities" are what Hegel points to in order to maintain that nature cannot adhere to rationality. Instead of treating these intermediate products and deviations from the species as exceptions to nature's nomological organization, these exceptions are actually the rule that

betray the essential irrationality of nature. Unlike a more traditionally hylomorphic account, in which the forms and essences in nature are given exceptional manifestations due to material constraints, these variations are the exceptions that prove the rule: "Nature everywhere [*allenthalben*] blurs the essential limits [*wesentlichen Grenzen*] of species and genera by intermediate and defective forms, which continually furnish counter examples to every fixed distinction."[166] It is difficult to see how the demarcations of species and genera can even be called essential (*wesentlichen*) limits anymore once one accepts that these limits are blurred, not in singular cases, but "everywhere" (*allenthalben*); the counterexamples are not truly counterexamples once they become paradigmatic. And these are precisely the paradigmatic cases in Hegel's argument for the multiplicity, irrationality, and randomness displayed throughout nature. Of course, nature is not globally random and irrational, but even if those species and genera display regularities and thereby traces of rationality, it is an essential characteristic of the regularities found in nature that they come with exceptions, with intermediate products that set limits on reason's capacity to comprehend nature in any fully self-determining manner. All one is left with then, is either the wonder Hegel mentioned earlier, or a recognition of radical contingency. One can recognize chance and wonder at irrationality and multiplicity, but one cannot comprehend it.

One may ask, however, if Hegel has any warrant to believe the existence of this radical contingency. For a philosopher so careful to undercut any recourse to "givens" and "immediacies" that are indeterminate or abstract, the notion of a *pure chance* that cannot be mediated by rational cognition appears hopelessly self-defeating. In other words, if we cannot have a logical grounding, a deduction or a construction of this pre-categorical sense of contingency, what right do we have to hypothesize about its existence? In the philosophy of nature, Hegel's answer appears to rely on the distinction between the Idea and the empirical manifestation of nature. The mismatch between the concepts, laws, or universal regularities that we come to expect from nature and nature's empirical resistance to being fully comprehended by those very laws is the closest one comes to evidence of the irrationality of nature: "In the impotence of Nature to adhere strictly to the Notion in its realization, lies the difficulty and, in many cases, the impossibility [*Unmöglichkeit*] of finding fixed distinctions for classes and orders from an empirical consideration [*empirischen Betrachtung*] of Nature."[167] While admitting *traces* of the *Begriff*, local laws and regularities, instantiated in each singular natural product, Hegel maintains that "these traces do not exhaust its nature."[168] The resistance of natural products and events to full conceptualization is *empirically* and *historically* present in each disjunction between the *Begriff* and *Natur*, in each resistance of nature to full incorporation to conceptual determination. It is important to understand that Hegel is not claiming that we have *empirical*

evidence of nature's radical contingency, but rather that in the disjunction or mismatch between conceptual and rational expectations and our empirical evidence we have something like an experience of nature's own irrationality that we can point to and describe.

Hegel's final speculative position, however, is to think of *nature's irrationality as its very reason*. This requires that we think of the incapacity of nature and its contingency not as mere expressions of *our* ignorance, but as nature's expression of its own multiplicity, and thereby of its inability to "live up" to the concept and to rationality. Unlike some form of neo-Kantian approach, Hegel's claim is not that the universality and abstraction of thought cannot contain the singularity of nature because the conceptual realm is external to nature,[169] but rather because nature is, in Hegel's strange formulation, external to itself: "the quality of nature taken as such is just this, to be the other in its own self, that which is *external to itself* [*das Andere an ihr selbst, das* Außer-sich-Seiende]."[170] The disjunction between the concept and reality is not simply a limitation of our discursive understanding, a defect of our human finite intellect, but is rather the expression of something essential *about nature*—namely, its own resistance to full incorporation into the categories of universality and necessity. While Hegel admits that radical contingency sets limits to philosophy, the limit is not set by reason itself, but by nature's own "incapacity." This incapacity, so he argues, is not to be seen as an accidental feature of nature, as if it did not live up to its full rational capacity, but rather as the true determination of nature: "Nature is not merely external in relation to this Idea (and to its subjective existence Spirit); the truth is rather that *externality* constitutes the specific character [*Bestimmung*] in which Nature, as Nature, exists."[171] Nature's contingency, in the sense of that which is external to the rational, is not deduced or constructed by reason, since this externality constitutes nature's *own exclusion* from full rational grounding. This "specific character" of contingency in nature, whether we call it nature's capacity or nature's incapacity, is distinct from the categorical and logical sense of contingency. This is not to deny the importance of reason's own self-limitation in the categorical logic of contingency, but simply to acknowledge an additional and irreducible sense of contingency operative in Hegel's philosophical account of nature. Instead of eliminating chance from nature and converting it to a mere epistemic incapacity, Hegel understands chance as nature's incapacity, but an incapacity that becomes the defining characteristic of the natural.

It is a matter of great importance here whether or not one finds such arguments persuasive, or rather one thinks that Schelling, Kierkegaard, and others are right in identifying a sleight of hand on Hegel's part, one that disfigures the Idea as the fulfilled unity between the concept and reality.

What are we to do with the simultaneous claim that the Idea is complete and all-encompassing and that, to a qualified extent, there are contingent aspects to reality that set limits to philosophy and to rational comprehension? Can Hegel, characteristically, have his cake and eat it too? What may be perceived as a slight of hand on Hegel's part is the way in which he slips between veridical and normative language regarding the final closure exemplified by the Idea. What I mean by this is that Hegel simultaneously designates these contingencies as nonexistents through ontological language and maintains that this ontological determination is really a normative claim about their lack of significance. Take as an example the following characteristic remark:

> The manifold natural genera or species must not be esteemed as anything more [*müssen für nichts Höheres geachtet werden*] than the capricious fancies of spirit in its representations. Both indeed show traces and inklings of the Concept on all sides, but do not present a faithful copy of it because they are the side of its free self-externality. The Concept is absolute power just because it can freely abandon its difference to the shape of self-subsistent diversity, outer necessity, contingency, caprice, opinion, which however must not be taken for more than the abstract aspect of *nothingness* [*die abstrakte Seite der Nichtigkeit genommen werden muß*].[172]

In one breath Hegel accepts the existence of finite contingent entities, in another he claims they are really nothing, but the transition is precariously balanced by the claim that they *must* (*muß*) not be taken as existing or that they ought not to be esteemed or respected (*geachtet werden*) as more than capricious fancies. These irrational manifestations are therefore the most extreme externality of the Idea, but insofar as they are taken to be mere nothings, they do not compromise or undermine any of the Idea's claim to completeness and wholeness.

We have seen that for Hegel the Idea has an ontological and a veridical status—the idea is not only all that exists in the sense of mere existence, but all the *truly exists*. What it means to be thus turns into a kind of normative concept determined by the idea of truth—only what is true exists: "The Idea being the unity of Concept and reality, *being* has attained the significance of *truth*; therefore what now *is* is only what is Idea."[173] This is another way of saying that what exists is the intelligible, or that to be is to be intelligible. However, there is another, looser sense of existence, by which one admits the existence and reality of finite and contingent things and events throughout nature and history. Hegel's final synthesis involves the important claim that denies any ontological status to the latter, by using the notion of *true being* normatively. It is telling that in these important final transitions Hegel uses the language of value and validity (*Geltung*) in order to make an ontological

point: "It is in the determinations of thought and the Concept that it *is* what it *is*. Therefore these determinations are in fact the sole thing that *matters*; they are the true object and content of reason [*Gegenstand und Inhalt der Vernunft*], and anything else that one understands by object and content in distinction from them has value only through them and in them [*gilt nur durch sie und in ihnen*]."[174] In other words, while there are contingencies in nature and in finite spirit, they *ought not* to be taken as valid in themselves—in some sense, they do not strictly and truly exist. For Hegel, however, it is important that this validity claim be not externally imposed upon finite and contingent entities. They rather show themselves to be inconsequential by negating themselves, "the negativity whereby its indifferent mutual externality exhibits itself as unessential."[175] The argument here is closely connected to the one he made early in the *Science of Logic* regarding the groundlessness of the finite, namely, that finite things undermine themselves ontologically. The impotence of nature and the way that it is external to itself is closely related to the manner in which finite entities limit themselves and thereby point to their own demise.

It is telling that the argument for the groundlessness of the finite in the beginning of the *Science of Logic* also involves a curious blending of ontological and normative language. Finite things exist in such a way that they point beyond themselves to their own overcoming, and Hegel calls this relation a limitation (*das Schranke*), analyzing it under the normative notion of "the ought" (*das Sollen*). Insofar as finite things have the negative self-relation we discussed in the previous sections, they negate themselves into the true concept of negative self-relation, that is, infinity. Just as nature has its determination as a negative relation to itself that points beyond itself, toward spirit, finite entities overcome themselves: "Finite things are, but their relation to themselves is that they are negatively self-related and in this very self-relation send themselves away beyond themselves, beyond their being."[176] This means, in the end, that finite entities do not have *veritable* existence, since the "ought" relation implies a groundlessness that can only be grounded in another. Hegel here blends the ontological language of being and non-being with the normative one of ought-to-be and ought-not-to-be: "The being-in-itself of something in its determination reduces itself therefore to an *ought-to-be* [Sollen] through the fact that the same thing which constitutes its in-itself is in one and the same respect a *non-being* [Nichtsein]."[177] The crucial point in the argument here is that the "ought" and the "limitation" are not imposed upon finite things from outside—this is not a normativity that spirit or mind or the Idea inflicts upon finite entities. Rather, their very determination is that they ought-to-be something other and more than they are, more than finite, and that they determine themselves as such: "The limitation of the

finite is not something external to it; on the contrary, its own determination is also its limitation; and this latter is both itself and also the ought-to-be."[178] We find here a move closely related to the impotence of nature to "live up" to its freedom. Similarly, finite things undermine themselves into nonbeings, in the sense of not *truly* existing.[179]

In both of these cases, in the impotence of nature and in the groundlessness of the finite, we have Hegel's most important conjuring trick for the sake of the closure of his holism. The Idea can be whole, complete, and all-encompassing because that which it cannot incorporate or include due to irrationality is *internally* self-undermining or self-sublating. If such a move is deemed legitimate and successful, then Hegel can be said to both *include* contingent and finite entities within the absolute idea, and to include them through their *own self-exclusion*. He can therefore claim that he has successfully mediated between the idea and its most extreme other, radical contingency, and that he has not excluded anything from the completeness of the idea. To be is to be intelligible—all that exists, both in nature and in spirit, is somehow grounded in the intelligibility of the idea. That which is not intelligible is in one sense said to exist—there are contingencies in both nature and finite spirit—but in another, more rigorous sense, these must be taken as mere nothings. This slippage between ontological language and normative language suggests that there may be something of a deeper problem here, one that Schelling pointed out by claiming that "there is obviously something other and something more than mere reason in the world."[180] Does the difficulty in incorporating nature and natural contingency point to something that resists intelligibility? Or to put it in Hegel's own ontological language, is there something in what exists that withdraws from "truly being?" At times, it appears that Hegel sees the depth of the problem, even if in his more systematic moments he seems to suggest that it is not of much consequence:

> Nature confronts us as a riddle and a problem [*Rätsel und Problem*], whose solution both attracts and repels us: attracts us, because Spirit is presaged in Nature; repels us, because Nature seems an alien existence, in which Spirit does not find itself. . . . What is Nature? It remains a problem. When we see Nature's processes and transformations we want to grasp its simple essence, to compel this Proteus to cease its transformations and show itself to us and declare itself to us.[181]

Has this Proteus been compelled to submit to intelligibility, or does it still remain a riddle and a problem? If one is not satisfied with what I have called Hegel's trick of including these aspects of nature through their internal self-exclusion, then one needs to further investigate a dimension of existence that is not fully intelligible, one that withdraws itself from any form

of intelligibility. It is to this task that I will turn in the following chapter, by means of an inquiry regarding Heidegger's own attempts to overcome the modern dichotomy between nature and world.

NOTES

1. Several commentators have stressed this aspect of Hegel's philosophy, namely, that its initial task can be seen as an attempt to overcome modern dichotomies. Some paradigmatic versions of these accounts can be found in Charles Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 41–52 and Michael Forster, *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 17–125.
2. Hegel, DFS, 89; DS, 20.
3. Hegel, DFS, 82; DS, 12.
4. Hegel, DFS, 90; DS, 21.
5. Hegel, DFS, 90; DS, 21.
6. Hegel, DFS, 83; DS, 13.
7. Hegel, DFS, 80; DS, 10.
8. Hegel, FK, 189; GW, 430.
9. Hegel, PhS, 10; PhG, 22–23.
10. Hegel, PhS, 490; PhG, 587.
11. Hegel, DFS, 83; DS, 13.
12. Hegel, DFS, 114; DS, 47.
13. Hegel, PhS, 490; PhG, 587.
14. Hegel, PhS, 11; PhG, 24.
15. Hegel, PhS, 10, PhG, 23.
16. Hegel, PhS, 492; PhG, 590.
17. Hegel, PhS, 492; PhG, 590.
18. Hegel, SL, 118; WL I, 127.
19. Hegel, PN, 13; NP, 24.
20. Robert Pippin, "Leaving Nature Behind, or Two Cheers for 'Subjectivism,'" in *Reading McDowell: On Mind and World*, edited by Nicholas Smith (New York: Routledge, 2002), 70.
21. Hegel, DFS, 83; DS, 13.
22. Hegel, SL, 118; WL I, 127.
23. Hegel, SL, 711–60; WL II, 409–61.
24. Hegel, SL, 761; WL II, 462.
25. On this point, see especially James Kreines, *Reason in the World: Hegel's Metaphysics and Its Philosophical Appeal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) and Karen Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life: Self-Consciousness, Freedom, Logic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
26. Hegel, PhS, 100; PhG, 132.
27. Hegel, PhS, 109; PhG, 143.
28. Hegel, PhS, 263; PhG, 324.

29. Hegel, PhS, 265; PhG, 326.
30. Hegel, PhS, 263; PhG, 325.
31. Hegel, PM, 8; PG, 17.
32. Hegel, PM, 8; PG, 17.
33. Hegel, PM, 11; PG, 21.
34. Hegel, PM, 20; PG, 32.
35. Hegel, PM, 21; PG, 33.
36. Some classic formulations of metaphysical interpretations can be found in Rolf-Peter Horstmann, *Die Grenzen der Vernunft. Eine Untersuchung zu Zielen und Motiven des Deutschen Idealismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Anton Hain, 1991) and Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). For non-metaphysical or post-Kantian readings, see Klaus Hartmann, "Hegel: a Non-metaphysical View," in *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Alasdair MacIntyre, Notre Dame: University Notre Dame Press, 1972), and Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*: *The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
37. Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 80.
38. For Taylor, the self-determination of the concept is at work everywhere, "for everything is an emanation of the Concept," Taylor, *Hegel*, 301.
39. Taylor, *Hegel*, 298.
40. Rolf-Peter Horstmann, "Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit as an Argument for a Monistic Ontology," *Inquiry* 49, no. 1 (February 2006): 103–18.
41. Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 53–71.
42. Klaus Hartmann, "Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View," in *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Alasdair MacIntyre (New York: Anchor Books, 1972), 101–24.
43. Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
44. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
45. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*, 8.
46. Hartmann, "Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View," 111.
47. Hegel, SL 843; WL II, 573.
48. Robert Pippin, "Leaving Nature Behind, or Two Cheers for 'Subjectivism,'" in *Reading McDowell: On Mind and World*, edited by Nicholas Smith (New York: Routledge, 2002), 70.
49. Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason*, 8–9.
50. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35. Translation amended.
51. Hegel, SL, 607; WL II, 282.
52. Hegel, PN, 17; NP, 28.
53. Hegel, SL, 118; WL I, 127.
54. Hegel, SL, 586; WL II, 257.
55. Hegel, SL 118; WL I, 127.
56. Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 46.
57. Hegel, PN, 14; NP, 24.

58. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35.
59. Hegel, PN, 24; NP 36.
60. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35.
61. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35.
62. Willem A. deVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity: An Introduction to Theoretical Spirit* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 36.
63. James Kreines, "The Logic of Life: Hegel's Philosophical Defense of Teleological Explanation in Biology," *Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, edited by Frederick Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 376.
64. Cf. James Kreines, "Metaphysics without Pre-Critical Monism: Hegel on Lower-Level Natural Kinds and the Structure of Reality," *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain,* 57/58 (2008): 48–70 and deVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity*, 33–52.
65. deVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity*, 42–45.
66. Hegel, SL, 134; WL I, 146.
67. Hegel, SL, 134; WL I, 145.
68. Hegel, SL, 778; WL II, 490.
69. Hegel, SL, 135; WL I, 146.
70. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 471.
71. Hegel, PN, 443; NP, 536. In light of many passages such as these, I find it difficult to maintain the reading that Robert Pippin suggests: "Nature itself, that is, does not 'develop into spirit.' Thinking through accounts of nature can be said to lead one to spirit's own standards ('for itself') of account-giving, and therewith to the nature of normative authority in general." Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy*, 49. I see Hegel instead as giving an account of the origin of subjectivity and inwardness from within nature, thus the natural emergence of the *capacities* that allow for such account-giving and normativity that Pippin describes. This does not have to imply that these developed capacities are reducible to their natural origins, as in some form of reductionistic physicalism.
72. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 471.
73. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 471.
74. Hegel, SL, 586; WL II, 257.
75. Hegel, SL, 586; WL II, 257.
76. Hegel, IPH, 58; VPG, 76.
77. Hegel, IPH, 60; VPG, 77.
78. Hegel, IPH, 60; VPG, 77.
79. Hegel, SL, 781; WL II, 494–95.
80. Hegel, SL, 781; WL II, 495.
81. Hegel, SL, 781; WL II, 495.
82. Hegel, SL, 781; WL II, 495.
83. Hegel, SL, 782; WL II, 496.
84. Hegel, PM; PG.

85. Hegel, PM, 3; PG, 11. On the important role that Aristotle plays for Hegel's philosophy, see Alfredo Ferrarin, *Hegel and Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

86. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Robert Bartlett and Susan Collins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 10–14; Greek text in Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 25–37.

87. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 12; Loeb, 30.

88. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 12; Loeb, 30.

89. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 12–13; Loeb, 30.

90. Hegel, SL 762; WL II, 471.

91. Hegel, PM, 8; PG, 17.

92. Hegel, IPH, 20; VPG, 30.

93. Hegel, IPH, 57; VPG, 74.

94. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit: 1827–1828*, translated by Robert Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 60.

95. An especially persuasive account of this process of naturalization is to be found in Hasana Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

96. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, in *Complete Works*, translated by Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2002), 239.

97. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 240.

98. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 278.

99. Hegel, PhS, 12; PhG, 26.

100. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

101. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 270–71; *Akademieausgabe* 5: 400.

102. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 268; *Akademieausgabe* 5: 397.

103. Hegel, SL, 739; WL II, 443. On the complex issue of Hegel's critique of Kant's account of teleological judgment, see especially James Kreines, *Reason in the World: Hegel's Metaphysics and Its Philosophical Appeal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 77–112, and Sally Sedgwick, *Hegel's Critique of Kant: From Dichotomy to Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 14–69.

104. On the overly subjective tendencies of Kantian idealism, see Sally Sedgwick, *Hegel's Critique of Kant: From Dichotomy to Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 70–97.

105. Hegel, PhS, 491; PhG, 590.

106. Hegel, IPH, 20; VPG, 30.

107. Hegel, IPH, 20; VPG, 30.

108. Hegel, IPH, 20–21; VPG, 30–31.

109. Hegel, IPH, 22; VPG, 32.

110. Hegel, IPH, 20–21; VPG, 31.

111. Hegel, IPH, 58; VPG, 75.

112. Hegel, IPH, 77; VPG, 99.

113. Hegel, IPH, 82; VPG, 104.

114. Hegel, IPH, 60; VPG, 77.

115. On this logic of negative self-relation, and its connection to Hegel's positive concept of infinity, see the especially lucid account offered by Andrew Davis, "Hegel's Idealism: The Infinite as Self-Relation," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* vol. 29, no. 2 (2012): 177–94.

116. Hegel, PhS, 489; PhG, 586–87.

117. Hegel, PM, 8; PG, 17.

118. Hegel, PM, 15, PG, 25 (translation modified). The translation by Wallace obscures the speculative identity in contradiction by recourse to a disjunctive "or": "Liberty: i.e., it is the notion's absolute negativity or self-identity."

119. Hegel, SL 583; WL II, 253.

120. Hegel, SL 583; WL II, 253.

121. G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, translated by T. M. Knox and A. V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 79. Italics mine.

122. Karen Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life: Self-Consciousness, Freedom, Logic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

123. Hegel, SL, 761; WL II, 470.

124. Hegel, SL, 760; WL II, 468.

125. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 470.

126. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 470–71.

127. Hegel, SL, 763; WL II, 472.

128. Hegel, SL, 763–64; WL II, 473.

129. Hegel, SL, 764; WL II, 473.

130. Hegel, SL, 768; WL II, 478.

131. Hegel, PM, 10; PG, 19–20.

132. Hegel, PM, 10; PG, 20.

133. Hegel, SL, 769; WL II, 480.

134. Hegel, SL, 770; WL II, 481.

135. Hegel, SL, 135; WL I, 146.

136. Hegel, SL, 771–72; WL II, 483.

137. Hegel, SL, 773; WL II, 485.

138. Hegel, PM, 10; PG, 20.

139. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 471.

140. Hegel, SL, 762; WL II, 471.

141. "At the highest stage of this triumph over asunderness, in feeling, the essence of Spirit which is held captive in Nature attains to an incipient being-for-self and begins to be free." (Encyclopedia Spirit 14)

142. Hegel, PM, 11; PG, 21.

143. Hegel, SL, 50; WL I, 44.

144. Hegel, PN, 13; NP, 24.

145. Hegel, PM, 8; PG, 17.

146. Hegel, SL, 757; WL II, 465.

147. F. W. J. Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy: The Berlin Lectures*, translated by Bruce Matthews (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 136.

148. Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*, 145.

149. F. W. J. Schelling, *On the History of Modern Philosophy*, translated by Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 147. For a summary and defense of Schelling's criticisms, see Andrew Bowie's *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1993). For a Hegelian defense to these criticisms, see especially Alan White's *Absolute Knowledge: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1983) and Stephen Houlgate's "Schelling's Critique of Hegel's *Science of Logic*," *Review of Metaphysics* 53, no. 1 (September 1999): 99–128.

150. Ludwig Feuerbach, "Toward a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy," in *The Fiery Brook: Selected Writings*, translated by Zawar Hanfi (New York: Verso Books, 2012), 53–96.

151. Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 109–25.

152. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, translated by E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973) and Theodor W. Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies*, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993).

153. Hegel, SL, 755; WL II, 462.

154. This fact is cogently argued for throughout the chapters on contingency in John W. Burbidge, *Hegel's Systematic Contingency* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

155. Dieter Henrich, "Hegel's Theorie über den Zufall," *Kant-Studien*, 50 (1958/59): 131–48.

156. George di Giovanni, "The Category of Contingency in the Hegelian Logic" and John Burbidge, "The Necessity of Contingency: An Analysis of Hegel's Chapter on 'Actuality' in the Science of Logic," in *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy*, ed. Warren Steinkraus and Kenneth L. Schmitz (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1980); John Burbidge, *Hegel's Systematic Contingency* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Stephen Houlgate, "Necessity and Contingency in Hegel's Science of Logic," *Owl of Minerva* 27, no. 1 (1995): 37–49.

157. Hegel, SL, 545; WL II, 205.

158. Hegel, SL, 545; WL II, 206.

159. Hegel, SL 545; WL II 206.

160. Raoni Padui, "The Necessity of Contingency and the Powerlessness of Nature: Hegel's Two Senses of Contingency," *Idealistic Studies* 40, no. 3 (2010): 243–55.

161. Surprisingly, this point was already clearly perceived by John McTaggart over a century ago in his *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic*: "The treatment of the problem of contingency in the dialectic presents a curious alternation between two incompatible points of view, by the first of which contingency is treated as a category, while by the second it is attributed to the incapacity of Nature to realize the Idea."161. John M. E. McTaggart, *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1896), 65. McTaggart notices that the *internal* limitation of reason argued for through the category of contingency is incompatible with the *external* limitation argued for through nature's incapacity to be fully rational.

162. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35.
163. Hegel, SL 607; WL II 282.
164. Hegel, PN, 17; NP, 28.
165. Hegel, PN, 23; NP, 35.
166. Hegel, PN, 24; NP, 36.
167. Hegel, PN, 24; NP, 36.
168. Hegel, 23; NP, 35. The picture of Hegel that emerges from these passages is much closer to contemporary accounts wherein nomological regularities are the outcomes of local and singular capacities and tendencies instead of universal laws, such as the account given by Nancy Cartwright, *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
169. This type of formulation is made explicit in Rickert's account of the relationship between concept formation and the singularity and individuality of reality. Cf. Heinrich Rickert, *The Limits of Concept Formation in the Natural Science*, trans. Guy Oakes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
170. Hegel, SL, 118; WL I, 127.
171. Hegel, PN, 14; NP, 24.
172. Hegel, SL, 607–8; WL II, 282–83.
173. Hegel, SL, 757; WL II, 465.
174. Hegel, SL, 833; WL II, 560.
175. Hegel, SL, 759; WL II, 467.
176. Hegel, SL, 129; WL I, 139.
177. Hegel, SL, 133; WL I, 144.
178. Hegel, SL, 133; WL I, 144.
179. Hegel goes so far as to suggest that this important idea, namely, that finite things do not have true being, is the very essence of idealism: "The proposition that the finite is ideal constitutes idealism. The idealism of philosophy consists in nothing else than in recognizing that the finite has no veritable being [wahrhaft Seiendes]" (SL, 154; WL I, 172).
180. F. W. J. Schelling, *On the History of Modern Philosophy*, translated by Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 147.
181. Hegel, PN, 3; NP, 12.

Historical Interlude 2

The Modern Dichotomy Transformed and Repeated

POST-KANTIAN REFORMULATIONS: THE PROBLEM OF HISTORY

Before turning to Heidegger's own project of reconciliation in the following chapter, I would briefly like to outline a profound transformation that occurred in the nineteenth century under the pressures of what may be generally called the Historical School,[1] a transformation that is important for situating and contextualizing Heidegger's own project of a fundamental hermeneutic ontology. The transformation of the concept of nature resultant from the revolution in the natural sciences of the seventeenth century were largely seen to clash, as we have seen, with the domains of morality and religion. Philosophers of the eighteenth century, therefore, were interested primarily in reconciling the accounts of natural science to traditional religion and morality, or in the immediate post-Kantian tradition, to reconcile the theoretical with the practical. However, as a new and robust understanding of history was developing in Germany in the nineteenth century, the dichotomy between a world of nature and a human world came to be reformulated as a distinction between the domain of nature and the domain of history. There were, of course, many notable precursors to this new historical understanding of the human world. Giambattista Vico's *Scienza Nuova* of 1744 established a new science of human institutions, understood as "the world of civil society" that had "been made by men,"[2] in contrast to the world of nature that had been made by God. Jean-Jacques Rousseau had attempted several historical articulations of the rise of civil society and social inequality as well as human language; Johann Gottfried von Herder had developed several versions of a history of humanity; and Alexis de Tocqueville had undertaken a sociological and historical account of the fundamental shift from aristocratic to democratic and egalitarian principles. To these must be added Hegel's own historicizing of the development of world-spirit (*Welt-Geist*), as well as the more historicist

and contextualist methods developed in Germany in the nineteenth century by Friedrich Carl von Savigny and Leopold von Ranke. The result of such gradual influences and transformations is that by the end of that century, we find several theoretical accounts of how one ought to rethink the relationship between the natural world and the human world, with the human world now understood as a human *historical* world. This is the context within which Heidegger is working in the early twentieth century, and because of this I will now briefly outline three very different and influential accounts of that relationship, accounts that serve as important contexts from which Heidegger's own project can be better understood.

Wilhelm Dilthey's 1883 *Introduction to the Human Sciences*[3] attempts to create a fundamental and theoretically established distinction between the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) and the human or social sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), and to proclaim the independence of the latter from the former as well as from metaphysics. As he indicates in his preface to that work, he sees himself as working from within the Historical School broadly conceived, and to be offering a philosophical foundation to the diverse historicist and historical scholarship found therein.[4] His stated goal is to do for the autonomous sphere of the human historical world what Francis Bacon had done to the study of the natural sciences.[5] The human historical world may include all the products and expressions of the human mind, be they art, religion, law, institutions, economic arrangements, and political organizations, all of which are understood as developing historically in time. Dilthey sees that the human being's self-understanding develops into "two points of view"[6] and interprets these two points of view in a manner that is at first very closely reminiscent of Schelling's division between transcendental idealism and natural philosophy. On the one hand, he states: "I find the whole external world to be given in my consciousness, and all the laws of nature to be subject to the conditions of my consciousness," while on the other hand, I "see changes within spiritual life subject to external interference—natural and experimental—consisting of physical changes impinging on the nervous system."[7] The first standpoint begins from our inner psychological life, our lived experience (*Erlebnis*), while the latter is the standpoint of the empirical and experimental natural sciences. Rather than seeking a reconciliation, as for example Schelling did in the higher indifference-point of the absolute, or as Hegel did in the idea as negative self-relation, Dilthey understands these two standpoints to be irreducible to one another, each giving rise to the natural sciences and the human sciences (*Naturwissenschaften und Geisteswissenschaften*) respectively.

While the natural sciences investigate the causal nexus of nature, and include the human being as just another being alongside other natural beings, the human sciences should be founded upon this inner psychological life and

its expressions—thus on a *psychic* structural nexus rather than a *physical* structural nexus. The foundational dichotomy that Dilthey uses to explain this division is the Kantian one between *inner* and *outer*—the inner world of lived experience, in which we feel, sense, and will, gives rise through objectifying constructions to the products of the spirit. By contrast, our outer sense and experience of the external world give rise to the objectifying philosophies of natural science. However, the natural scientific account is completely incommensurable to the inner world as felt, as it were, from the inside, or what he calls simply "the lived experience of the self."[8] The attempt to explain away the inner lived experience by means of the natural-scientific attitude, examples of which we saw in Descartes's and Galileo's reduction of secondary quality to primary qualities, undercuts the autonomy of the psychic nexus in favor of a physical explanation. As he expresses it in his 1910 *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*: "A feeling exists insofar as it is felt, and it exists just as it is felt: The consciousness of it and its constitution, its being-given and its reality, are not different from one another."[9] Heat is heat as felt by lived experience, and not "really" simply the motion of atoms and their effects upon our sense-organs. Or rather, it is both, seen from the incommensurable standpoints of the *Naturwissenschaften* and the *Geisteswissenschaften*. The historical human world thus requires a different kind of science, one based on hermeneutic understanding and self-reflection, rather than on naturalistic explanation.[10]

Around the same time, the so-called Baden or Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism undertook a very different understanding of the relationship between the natural and the historical, namely, a *logical* opposition that was substantially at odds with Dilthey's articulation. While Dilthey retained something of an ontological distinction, in the sense that it is something particular about the human being and her inner experience that gives rise to the historical world, the neo-Kantian understanding of the two-fold points of view of the natural and the historical rests primarily on the tendency of concept-formation.[11] In the early formulation of Wilhelm Windelband in his influential 1894 lecture "History and Natural Science," the natural sciences should be understood as *nomothetic* while the historical disciplines as *idiographic*.[12] This distinction rests on the difference between the general and the particular, or more precisely, on the tendency of natural science toward general explanatory laws and of the historical disciplines toward the particular and individual aspects of historical events. Therefore, while in Dilthey's system psychology and its understanding of the psychic nexus of lived experience is at the foundation of the historical sciences, for Windelband psychology, insofar as it too seeks general laws for human behavior, "falls

unambiguously within the domain of the natural sciences."[13] What, then, differentiates the natural from the historical?

In order to answer this question, let us now turn to Heidegger's *doktorvater* Heinrich Rickert and to his extensive elaboration of Windelband's distinction in his *The Limits of Concept Formation in Natural Science: A Logical Introduction to the Historical Sciences*.[14] Rickert follows Windelband in maintaining that the natural sciences are nomothetic or nomological—their goal is always to subsume the particular under universal laws. To know something in a natural-scientific manner is to ignore the spurious, individual, and contingent in order to find underlying regularities that something shares with other particulars: "like the content of every concept of natural science, the content of a nomological concept is general."[15] But Rickert goes further in his analysis by claiming that this fact creates a radical gap between the concept-formation of the natural sciences and reality itself: "The content of all empirical reality, on the other hand, is individual. This gap can never be bridged."[16] For example, if we want to understand the entity "Martin Heidegger" in terms of natural science, we will endeavor to learn what Heidegger shares with other human beings, what psychological and physiological brain structures he has, what he shares with other mammals, what biological structures he has, and so on. But if we want to understand "Martin Heidegger" as a historical individual who was born on September 26, 1899, in Messkirch, then we are searching for what is distinctive and ultimately unique about that entity. If we were to designate by "historical" that which is unique, that which happens only once, then the historical marks off a kind of limit to natural-scientific understanding: "Thus the fissure between concepts and individuals produced by natural science is a fissure between concepts and empirical reality as such in its uniqueness and distinctness."[17] But note that, unlike in Dilthey's account, this historical entity need not be a human being, such as Martin Heidegger, with an inner psychological life and lived experience. If we were to understand a very specific lump of coal, the very one used to heat Heidegger's log cabin on a particular day of 1957, then we would once again be treating it as an individual and historical entity, rather than a particularly combustible rock with such-and-such geological and chemical properties. In Rickert's own example he states that surprisingly, as unique individuals, Goethe is no more or less complex than a piece of sulfur, since "the manifold of *both* realities is infinite."[18] The distinction is not ontological, having to do with the kinds of beings in question, but a merely logical one. There is nothing special about the complexity and mode of being of a human being's inner experience when it comes to the distinction between the natural and the historical.

While we still retain here a view of the natural sciences in which the concept of nature is inhospitable to true human meaningful dwelling, the

dichotomy between nature and world has been considerably reformulated. It is no longer a question of a human who inhabits both a causal nexus of the natural world and an intelligible world compatible with freedom and morality, but of a human who is simultaneously natural and *historical*. Despite the obvious differences between Dilthey's hermeneutic historicism and Rickert's neo-Kantianism, the problem of reconciling nature and world has been displaced. As natural beings, we still live in a material world governed by natural laws. But as unique historical individuals, we inhabit a historical world that is characterized and determined by art, religion, habits, social institutions, and political orders. By the late nineteenth century, we further find a continued divergence between the kinds of knowledge and kinds of inquiry that interpret those two aspects of our amphibian condition. The natural sciences are no longer simply dominated by mathematical physics, but include evolutionary biology and an increasingly naturalistic conception of psychology. The historical disciplines, including philology and linguistics, archeology and natural history, social and political history, continue to become more contextual and historical. The question now becomes whether or not we may need to reconcile these two accounts, or whether we are content, as Dilthey suggests, to keep these two tendencies within two relatively autonomous domains. Dilthey even cites Spinoza's famous phrase without any irony, without noting that it was actually critical of such unreconciled position: "[The human] exists in nature as a realm within a realm—*imperium in imperio*, to use an expression of Spinoza."[19] We know that the holistic tendency of philosophy was not only there at the beginning of the Greek classical period, but that it resurfaced after the pressures of natural science in the systematic tendencies of German idealism. As the natural sciences and the humanities continue to part ways, to create, in Snow's famous expression, "two cultures"[20] coexisting in the institution of the university, should the drive toward unification and reconciliation be completely abandoned? Should philosophy rest content in merely deciding whether it wants to be a handmaiden to the currently existing natural sciences, or a historical discipline ensconced within the humanities? It is against the backdrop of such questions that we find Edmund Husserl's phenomenological project as a renewed attempt at grounding and reconciliation, one that explicitly sees itself as a renewal of the classical holistic ideal of philosophy.

PHENOMENOLOGY: HUSSERL ON NATURE AND WORLD

A few years before the publication of *Ideas I*, Husserl wrote an article for the journal *Logos* that he was coediting in which he articulated his transcendental

phenomenology by differentiating it with respect to what he saw as the two dominant currents of contemporary thought: naturalism and historicism. The 1911 article in question, "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science,"[21] argues for the necessity of a phenomenological foundation to human scientific endeavor, claiming that neither the naturalism of the natural sciences nor the historicism prevalent in Dilthey's *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* were capable of providing such normative foundations. He begins by claiming that while philosophy has always sought, since its Greek inception, to be a rigorous scientific endeavor, its history is primarily a history of failure. Echoing Kant's question regarding whether metaphysics as a science is possible, Husserl states that "the question of philosophy's relation to the natural and humanistic sciences—whether the specifically philosophical element of its work, essentially related as it is to nature and the human spirit, demands fundamentally new attitudes."[22] Husserl at first provides a quick historical survey of how it is that we came to the present circumstances, in which both the natural sciences and the humanistic disciplines work independently, side by side, without any solid normative grounding for their respective endeavors. On the one hand, the natural sciences have become a highly effective, productive, and influential endeavor while maintaining a primarily ungrounded empirical attitude toward the facts they investigate. On the other hand, the historical disciplines have dissolved into historical relativism or what he calls a "skeptical historicism"[23] that works independently of the successes of the natural-scientific attitude. The will toward a normative foundation for both enterprises, toward what he calls "rigorous science," has been attempted from time to time, but never with any definitive success:

> Such a fully conscious will for rigorous science dominated the Socratic-Platonic revolution of philosophy and also, at the beginning of the modern era, the scientific reactions against Scholasticism, especially the Cartesian revolution. Its impulse carries over to the great philosophies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; it renewed itself with most radical vigor in Kant's critique of reason and still dominates Fichte's philosophizing.[24]

Husserl's project of a transcendental phenomenology is thus placed within this long line of attempts to understand philosophy as a fundamental and grounding enterprise in relation to all human knowledge and understanding.[25] It is therefore a renewal of the classical holistic goal of philosophy, but within the context of the pressures of naturalism and historicism that arose in modernity.

The main problem with naturalism, according to Husserl, is that if it is taken to its consistent extreme, it endeavors to naturalize all the phenomena of consciousness by means of empirical psychology, and thus ends by

naturalizing the ideal norms and objective validities of its own scientific rigor into facts of consciousness. This procedure fails to provide a foundational space for the normative justification of its own endeavors: "Characteristic of all forms of extreme and consistent naturalism . . . is on one hand the naturalizing of consciousness, and on the other the naturalizing of ideas and consequently of all absolute ideals and norms."[26] A consistent historicism seems to fall into an analogous problem of grounding, and Husserl accuses it of succumbing, despite its foundational pretensions, to historical relativism. That is, all questions of "absolute validities in general"[27] are reduced to contingent historical facts that themselves lack further foundation. In contrast to the development of these two sciences of facts, of natural facts and historical facts, transcendental phenomenology investigates the ways in which consciousness and human experience can give rise to ideal objectivities, to norms and validities that can be universal rather than factual and contingent. As he puts it in his *Ideas I*: "In contrast to this, *pure or transcendental phenomenology* will *be established, not as a science of facts, but instead as a science of essences* (as an "'eidetic science,' a science that aims exclusively at securing 'knowledge of essences' and *no 'facts' at all*."[28] Its goal will be a systematic investigation of and grounding for our theoretical attitude toward the *world*. And by world Husserl means the following: "The world is the sum-total of objects of possible experience and experiential knowledge, of objects that can be known in correct theoretical thinking, on the basis of actually present experiences."[29] The concept of world in Husserl is therefore a holistic concept, one that simultaneously encompasses both our theoretical and practical activities, both our natural and historical modes of knowledge.

Late in his life, in the project of the *Crisis of the European Sciences* and its related texts, Husserl returned to the historical account he had briefly presented in the beginning of "Philosophy of Rigorous Science," now offering a deeper and more systematic account of how the need for a transcendental-phenomenological grounding arose historically. His account here is to a large extent similar to the one I have provided in the first historical interlude, but are worth rehearsing for some different inflections.[30] Husserl's historical narrative may be summarized as follows. He claims that the ancient Greeks invented a particular way of life, a philosophical form of life, which endeavors to comprehend the world as a whole from a theoretical attitude. The original sense of philosophy, he claims, is "the one all-encompassing science, the science of the totality of what is,"[31] or as he puts it in his late "Vienna Lecture": "universal science, science of the universe, of the all-encompassing unity of all that is."[32] In its original version, this science presupposed a continuous relationship between the world we experience, the everyday world around us, and the theoretical account given by the science. That is not to say that there was no distinction between appearance and reality, or that

appearances could not be at times deceptive, but simply that *there was only one true world*, both experienced and theoretically understood. But early in modernity, Husserl claims, a reformulation and reestablishment of this philosophical science leads to some unintended consequences. The modern philosophical and scientific revolution is for Husserl "a primal establishment which is at once a reestablishment and a modification of the Greek primal establishment."[33] Like the Greek original establishment, it attempts to be a philosophical science of all that is, of the world as a whole. But even if the original intention in Descartes and Galileo, who are the two primary innovators in Husserl's account of the modern project, remained holistic, "instead of being able to work itself out in fact, this ideal suffers inner dissolution [*innere Auflösung*]."[34] How does this dissolution come about?

As each natural science splits off as a branch from this one, all-encompassing philosophical science, it comes to have a more tenuous relation to its original founding. Its gradual and increasing success by virtue of specialization and its severance from the whole creates a paradoxical situation. The further a particular science is from its origin within philosophy, the more technically successful it is capable of becoming, while simultaneously its fundamental principles undergo crises that it no longer has resources to solve. In Husserl's formulation: "But this is to say that, ultimately, all modern sciences drifted into a peculiar, increasingly puzzling crisis with regard to the meaning of their original founding as branches of philosophy, a meaning which they continued to bear within themselves. This is a crisis which does not encroach upon the theoretical and practical successes of the special sciences; yet it shakes to the foundations the whole meaning of their truth."[35] Husserl is of course writing at a time when the paradigmatic sciences, physics and mathematics, are undergoing crises in their foundations while simultaneously remaining extremely fertile in their technical utility. These opposing tendencies, while paradoxical, are for him intimately related.

However, the distance that a science acquires from its foundation by virtue of specialization and fragmentation is not Husserl's main concern. His main concern is the dualism that is created by modern thought, a dualism that is felt in the universities as the split between the *Geisteswissenschaften* and the *Naturwissenschaften*. This division is not simply a process of specialization or a division of labor. Rather, the world itself, as the infinite object of a universal science, splits into two worlds: the natural world of science, and the meaningful, experienced world of psychic life. Furthermore, rather than remaining as a balanced dualism, the tendency over time is to ascribe more ontological weight to the former rather than the latter: "The world splits [*zerspaltet*], so to speak, into two worlds [*in zwei Welten*]: nature and the psychic world, although the latter, because of the way in which it is related to nature,

does not achieve the status of an independent world."[36] The historical source for this split is traced back by Husserl to Galileo's mathematization of nature. Modern mathematics, in all of its power and precision, was able to open up an infinite world of ideal objectivities.[37] Initially, this infinite world of ideal objects was still implicated in and grounded upon that universal philosophical science, even though it expanded the reach of that science from the finite horizon of the ancients to the infinite horizon of the moderns. But in doing so, it also transforms our very notion of nature: "nature itself becomes—to express it in a modern way—a mathematical manifold."[38] Whereas ancient geometry maintained some relation to its original process of abstraction, that is, to the related activities of land-surveying and land-measurement that gave birth to many of its theorems, modern mathematics can arise after a long historical series of processes of abstraction. Furthermore, modern science is capable of an even more powerful alienating effect, since even though it initially operates "by idealizing the world of bodies,"[39] it returns to the empirically intuited world and, by means of those very abstracted idealities, is able to gain exact knowledge of physical events. This twofold process of abstraction and idealization on the one hand, and successful empirical application and prediction on the other, lends more and more credence to the extravagant belief, exemplified by Galileo,[40] that the book of nature was written by God in a mathematical language.

According to Husserl's account, therefore, modern science effectuates a gradual abstraction from the everyday world we actually experience, which he technically calls the life-world (*Lebenswelt*). This life-world is both the meaning-fundament of the sciences themselves, that is, the source of any meaningful theoretical knowledge-claim, and that for-the-sake-of-which the knowledge of a science is directed. But Galilean modern science achieves "the surreptitious substitution of the mathematically substructed world of idealities"[41] for the life-world. This substitution, in so far as it involves a change-over of the original meaning through abstraction, is felt as a process of an "emptying of its meaning."[42] Mathematics can eventually become mere technique, mere manipulation of variables, rules, and procedures without any reference back to their meaning-fundament in lived experience. The original process of abstraction and the original change-over in meaning may be available to the thinker who performs it, but as a science develops historically, each accomplishment, each *Leistung*, is buried in a process Husserl likens to geological metaphor of sedimentation.[43] The life-world is slowly buried under the debris of mental activities that are reified into scientific results, or as he puts it in another metaphor, is "dressed up" in a "garb of ideas."[44] Due to the gradual accumulation of knowledge, due to historical sedimentation and the specialization of its practitioners, any attempt to unearth original meaning becomes more and more difficult with time. The result is a crisis in the

sciences, which for Husserl must be understood as "the loss of its meaning for life."[45]

If modern mathematical physics has replaced our naive relationship to the life-world in such a way as to dress it up with a garb of ideas, Husserl calls for a simultaneous project of de-sedimentation and reactivation. Reactivation[46] involves a phenomenological reconstruction of the active elements of consciousness that went into the constitution of the original formation of ideal objectivities. It becomes necessary, once a particular body of knowledge is large enough that no practitioner could reconstruct it from the ground up, that a science pass on some of its inherited knowledge as truths to be taken passively. This *passive reproduction* of what were originally *active productions* is involved in the "traditionalization" of a discipline. Husserl seems to imply, through his metaphors, that sedimentation, traditionalization, and the transition from activity to passivity convert living knowledge into dead knowledge. Therefore, the project of de-sedimentation is also described through the metaphor of revitalization. He states his purpose in the *Crisis* in the following manner: "It is to make vital again, in its concealed historical meaning, the sedimented conceptual system which, as taken for granted, serves as the ground of his private and nonhistorical work."[47] The necessity of reactivation and de-sedimentation point us in the direction of *phenomenology* as the solution to the modern crisis of dualism. Only transcendental phenomenology can excavate these sedimented accomplishments and once again tether them to the acts of consciousness that made them valid and objective. However, this re-grounding in transcendental phenomenology seems to be a variant of the transcendental idealist perspective that denied the true autonomy of the natural sciences and the natural scientific attitude toward the world. Husserl's project thus may appear to be a reconciliation between naturalism and the transcendental standpoint, but in effect ends up making the former dependent and subservient to the latter.

Husserl shows how the history of the development of mathematical physics slowly and meticulously builds a second world supervening upon our intuitively given life-world. This mathematically substructured world gives rise to the position Husserl variously calls "naturalism"[48] or "objectivism."[49] From within this standpoint, the everyday life-world is understood to be mostly illusory, and the scientific account will help explain the subjective world in an objective or naturalizing manner.[50] Insofar as we have become amphibians living between these two worlds, we can now appreciate what Husserl calls "the paradox of human subjectivity: being a subject for the world and at the same time being an object in the world."[51] The naturalistic and objectivistic substructure that tells us that we are simply one object in the world among others *is itself an historical accomplishment of subjectivity*, and so we are back to the dual standpoint opened up by Schelling's transcendental idealism

and *Naturphilosophie*. Husserl resolves this paradox in the direction of transcendental idealism, that is, he is closer to Fichte's than to Schelling's understanding of autonomy of the natural vis-à-vis the transcendental:

> *The spirit* [Der Geist], *and indeed only the spirit, exists in itself and for itself, is self-sufficient* [ist eigenständig]. . . . As for nature, however, in its natural-scientific truth, it is only apparently self-sufficient and can only apparently be brought by itself to rational knowledge in the natural sciences. For true nature in the sense of natural science is a product [*Erzeugnis*] of the spirit that investigates nature and thus presupposes the science of the spirit.[52]

Transcendental phenomenology is, then, that science of the spirit spoken of above, of the spirit's accomplishments that includes the truths and idealizations of natural science. Husserl's overcoming of the dichotomy between nature and world is no reconciliation or higher unification, but really a repetition of Fichtean subsumption and incorporation into subjectivity: "Here the spirit is not in or alongside nature; rather, nature is itself drawn into the spiritual sphere [*sondern diese rückt selbst in die Geistessphäre*]."[53] Therefore, while Fichte's and Husserl's solution to the problem of the dichotomy of nature and world have the virtue of overcoming the dichotomy, they do so at the expense of nature's true independent existence. One may therefore say that in an analogous way to how Hegel sought to perform a higher form of reconciliation than the one found within Fichte's subjective idealism, Heidegger must rework phenomenology so that it is not grounded, as it is in Husserl, in transcendental consciousness.

NOTES

1. For a thorough historical account of the German historical school, see Frederick C. Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
2. Giambattista Vico, *The New Science*, translated by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), 96.
3. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Introduction to the Human Sciences, Selected Works Volume I*, edited by Rudolf Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). Hereafter cited as *Human Sciences*.
4. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 48–49.
5. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 55.
6. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 67.
7. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 67.
8. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 60.

9. Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences, Selected Works, Volume III*, edited by Rudolf Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 48.

10. Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences, Selected Works, Volume III*, edited by Rudolf Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 104–5.

11. On this important debate, and the role that psychology played within the debate, see Frederick C. Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 337–45, 377–80.

12. Wilhelm Windelband, "History and Natural Science," in *Neo-Kantian Reader*, edited by Sebastian Luft (New York: Routledge, 2015), 287–98. On the continuing influence of Windelband's distinction for the self-articulation of the humanities and their distinction from the natural sciences, see Eric Hayot, *Humanist Reason: A History. An Argument. A Plan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), 19–61.

13. Wilhelm Windelband, "History and Natural Science," in *Neo-Kantian Reader*, edited by Sebastian Luft (New York: Routledge, 2015), 291.

14. Heinrich Rickert, *The Limits of Concept Formation in Natural Science: A Logical Introduction to the Historical Sciences*, translated by Guy Oakes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Hereafter cited as *Limits of Concept Formation.*

15. Rickert, *Limits of Concept Formation*, 40.

16. Rickert, *Limits of Concept Formation*, 40.

17. Rickert, *Limits of Concept Formation*, 39.

18. Rickert, *Limits of Concept Formation*, 57.

19. Dilthey, *Human Sciences*, 58.

20. C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

21. Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, translated by Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 71–147. Hereafter cited as "Philosophy as Rigorous Science."

22. Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," 72.

23. Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," 77.

24. Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," 78.

25. This, of course, is part of the view of philosophy strongly and famously criticized by Richard Rorty in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

26. Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," 80.

27. Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," 127.

28. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, translated by Daniel Dahlstrom (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014), 5.

29. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, translated by Daniel Dahlstrom (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014), 10.

30. A thorough account of a Husserlian understanding of the problem of the natural world can be found in Jan Patočka, *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem*, translated by Erika Abrams (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016).

31. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 8. Hereafter cited simply as *Crisis*. Whenever the German is included, citations will be to Edmund Husserl, *Der Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die Transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserliana Band VI (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976). Hereafter cited as *Krisis*.
32. Husserl, *Crisis*, 276.
33. Husserl, *Crisis*, 71.
34. Husserl, *Crisis*, 12; *Krisis*, 10.
35. Husserl, *Crisis*, 12.
36. Husserl, *Crisis*, 60; *Krisis*, 61.
37. Husserl, *Crisis*, 22.
38. Husserl, *Crisis*, 23.
39. Husserl, *Crisis*, 32.
40. Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer* (1623) in *The Essential Galileo*, edited and translated by Maurice Finocchiaro (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 183.
41. Husserl, *Crisis*, 48.
42. Husserl, *Crisis*, 44.
43. Husserl, *Crisis*, 52.
44. Husserl, *Crisis*, 51.
45. Husserl, *Crisis*, 5.
46. Husserl, *Crisis*, 149.
47. Husserl, *Crisis*, 71.
48. Husserl, *Crisis*, 127
49. Husserl, *Crisis*, 292.
50. Husserl, Crisis, 36–37.
51. Husserl, *Crisis*, 178.
52. Husserl, *Crisis*, 297; *Krisis*, 345.
53. Husserl, *Crisis*, 298; *Krisis*, 346.

Chapter 2

Heidegger on Nature

The Withdrawal of Being

THE EARLY HEIDEGGER'S UNDERSTANDING OF WORLD AND NATURE

I argued in the first section of the book that the classical view of philosophy, traceable at least to Plato and Aristotle, aspired to a kind of holism by which the human is oriented toward a knowing conception of the world in its entirety. Despite the fracturing of nature and world in modernity through the pressures of modern science, I tried to show that Hegel still understood the task of philosophy as a holistic enterprise, and set upon the explicit goal of reconciling the modern conceptions of world and nature. Heidegger's conception of philosophy should be understood against this backdrop, as he throughout his career maintains a holistic view of philosophy, whose fundamental themes are "world" (*Welt*) and "being" (*Sein*). However, Heidegger believes that the modern tradition of philosophy distorted the original sense of world by giving it a primarily cognitive and epistemological meaning. The tradition of subjectivity, roughly beginning with Descartes, running through transcendental idealism, and culminating in Husserl's phenomenology of consciousness, obscures the original sense of the human's relationship to the world by reconceiving it through the categories of subject and object. His explicit task in 1927's *Being and Time*, of recovering, restating, or repeating (*Wiederholung*) "the question of the meaning of Being [*die Frage nach dem Sinn von Sein*]"[1] is hindered by the fact that this modern tradition has concealed and covered over a pre-theoretical relationship to being and world. If the epistemological variant of the modern tradition is unable to think the happening of world, it is because it inappropriately thematizes the problem as a relationship between subjects and objects. As is well known, Heidegger is deeply critical of the dualism that splits the world into two substances, as in the Cartesian dualism between res cogitans and res extensa.[2] Neither *Dasein*,

Heidegger's term for the mode of being of the human being in its openness towards the world, nor the meaningful context of signification called world, can be thought through the categories of subjectivity and objectivity. To put it explicitly and bluntly: "Subject and Object do not coincide with Dasein and world."[3]

This is especially so because the subject in the modern tradition is artificially withdrawn from the world, leaving objects (*Gegenstände*) standing over and against it (*Gegen-stand*). The problem of getting the world back, of reconnecting a worldless subject to its decontextualized world arises from the un-worlding procedure of the theoretical attitude. By taking subject and object out of a context of meaningfulness, one comes to think of both in terms of substances that have to be glued back together:

> The traditional categories of thingness, which for definite reasons are also identified as the categories of being—thingness, substance, accident, property, causality—have their phenomenal genesis in this deficient meaningfulness. These categories are already drawn from a kind of access (the prepossession of presence and it fundamental determinations) which occurs in the process of a characteristic *unworlding* [Entweltlichung].[4]

Dasein comes to *replace* the traditional understanding of the subject in order to circumvent the modern epistemological problem of how our representations link up back to the world, an approach that for Heidegger "*splits* the phenomenon asunder, and there is no prospect of putting it together again from the fragments."[5] The key here is to refuse to separate Dasein and world in the first place, since as Heidegger puts it, we lack the "cement" to subsequently glue it back together. One of the main ways in which Dasein is contrasted to the traditional notion of subjectivity is the way in which it is essentially "in" a world, or the modes of being of Dasein "must be seen and understood *a priori* as gounded upon that state of Being we have called '*Being-in-the-world*' [*In-der-Welt-sein*]."[6] This does not mean that Dasein is "in" the world in the way that water is "in" the jug, which would be an ontic relation between two extant objects. Instead, being-in-the-world is an a priori of Dasein insofar is one cannot think of Dasein without necessarily understanding it as always already in the world.

Dasein moves about the world circumspectively and understandingly, taking care of beings in such a way that a prior familiarity with objects is implicitly presupposed. This letting beings be encountered as the beings that they are contextualizes them in what Heidegger calls a "totality of involvements [*Bewandtnisganzheit*]."[7] When an academic sits on a chair in front of a desk in order to begin some project, she is not, in some Kantian manner, faced with an unformed manifold which must be categorially ordered

and differentiated by the synthesizing activity of a subject. Instead, she encounters a chair as chair, a desk as desk, and not, as a carpenter might, as wood material out of which these objects were produced, or as a modern physicist might, through the physical properties constituting the atomic and molecular structures of these objects. This seeing-as involves a "context of relations [*Bezugszusammenhangs*]"[8] which constitutes the world of Dasein. The mode of being of such inneworldly beings is what Heidegger famously calls *Zuhandenheit*—handiness or readiness to hand. The theoretical attitude takes objects primarily in the mode of objective presence or presence at hand (*Vorhandenheit*), pre-understanding their innerworldly existence as the product of a subjective "coloring" or "interpretation." Things are, Heidegger claims, actually the reverse: only because beings are encountered and disclosed circumspectively within a world can they be, through a process of de-worlding, taken out of the totality of relevance and understood as objectively present. In direct confrontation against Kant's *Ding an sich*, Heidegger claims that it is *Zuhandenheit* that constitutes the being-in-itself of beings, and the mode in which the theoretical attitude relates to objects is founded and derivative: "Readiness-to-hand is the way in which entities as they are 'in themselves' are defined ontologico-categorially."[9] Our absorption in and by the world is primary, and as the famous example of the hammer in the workshop illustrates, it is only when the totality of relevance has broken down that the *Vorhandenheit* of beings can be made explicit.[10] Dasein cannot be separated from this context of relevance that constitutes its world, because, in a specific sense, *Da-sein* is its *Da*: "The entity which is essentially constituted by Being-in-the-world is itself in every case its 'there.'"[11] In this way, Heidegger seeks to distance himself from the separation between mind and world, subjectivity and objectivity, that he finds prevalent in the modern and the transcendental idealist tradition.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger identifies four distinct meanings for the term "world," meanings that cut across the ontological difference between being and beings. The first sense of world, which Heidegger calls its *ontical* concept, is the world as "the totality of those entities which can be present-at-hand within the world."[12] In this ontical sense, the world is just a sum total of all entities, including rocks, chairs, and Dasein itself, if misunderstood as simply just another entity alongside other entities. The second sense of world is as an ontological one, which "signifies the Being of those entities which we have just mentioned."[13] If one is asking not about a simple totality, as in a list of entities, but about the being of those entities, then one has moved from the ontic to the ontological conception of world. Furthermore, Heidegger identifies another ontical sense of the world as the world which factical Dasein inhabits, the environmental concerns that Dasein has about its world. This sense he calls "a pre-ontological existentiell signification"[14] of World, since it

pertains to the fact that Dasein is itself an entity that moves circumspectively within its world. Finally, if one asks ontologically about the being of this third sense of world, the world that factical Dasein inhabits, we arrive at "the ontologico-existential concept of *worldhood*."[15] This worldhood of the world is the primary target of Heidegger's phenomenological ontology, insofar as he endeavors to phenomenologically move from the third sense of "world" in the analytic of Dasein in order to uncover its structural components and thereby lay bare the concept of the *worldhood* of the world. What Heidegger means by world in *Being and Time*, therefore, should always be differentiated from the first and second meanings of the term, and should be reserved for the world as co-constituted by Dasein as an entity that always already has an understanding being in its relationship with entities.

If Heidegger sought to unify Dasein and its world through a phenomenological account of being-in-the-world, one may ask what happens to the concept of *nature* in his early writings of the twenties. This is also particularly pressing question since, as we have seen in the second historical interlude, the problem of the relationship between the natural world and the historical world was a significant one for the philosophical context within which Heidegger is writing, namely, Dilthey's historicism, the Southwest school of neo-Kantianism, and Husserlian phenomenology. Heidegger was deeply influenced by Dilthey, wrote his dissertation under Rickert, and of course, was perceived by many to be an inheritor to Husserl's phenomenological project. Against this backdrop, it is surprising that in Heidegger's texts and seminars of the twenties one finds few articulations of any *central* conception of nature. In fact, we will see that it is actually quite difficult to reconstruct a coherent account of nature in the early Heidegger, especially insofar as he maintains a partial allegiance to transcendental philosophy, while already having moved beyond it into an ontological understanding of Dasein. In *Being and Time*, nature is thematized as an innerworldly being, as an object of investigation (*Vorhandenheit*) or practical engagement (*Zuhandenheit*), but this still requires a further articulation of nature's existence independent of its relationship to Dasein's understanding of being. Much of the difficulty here lies, I think, in understanding to what extent Heidegger remained faithful to certain Kantian strictures generally and to Husserl's phenomenological reductions more specifically. Nature marks a limit-case of some kind for investigating the relationship between being and appearing, between ontology and phenomenology, since it is a phenomena that shows itself in such a way that seems to *require* an existence beyond that which is manifest to human experience. Because of this difficulty, the ambiguous place of nature in Heidegger's early phenomenological work can be seen as a testing ground for the limits of Heidegger's claim that "*only as phenomenology, is ontology possible*."[16]

Heidegger initially accounts for natural entities in his phenomenological ontology by introducing a *categorial* understanding of nature: "If one understands Nature ontologico-categorially, one finds that Nature is a limiting case of the Being [*ein Grenzfall des Seins*] of possible entities within-the-world."[17] The dominant mode of comportment toward natural entities described in *Being and Time* is thematized through the category of *Vorhandenheit*, or presence-at-hand. By understanding nature as present-at-hand, one discloses entities through the primarily epistemological standpoint of cognition of an already *objectified* nature. This categorical understanding of nature is one that skips over (*Überspringen*) and leaves undetermined the phenomenon of being-in-the-world: "One tries instead to Interpret the world in terms of the Being of those entities [*dem Sein des Seienden*] which are present-at-hand within-the-world [*innerweltlich vorhanden*] but which are by no means proximally discovered—namely, in terms of Nature."[18] According to Heidegger, this is the sense of nature dominant in modern philosophy, and the category of *Vorhandenheit* is the innerworldly determination of the being of these beings. This sense of nature is one particular mode of being-in-the-world, one that involves a peculiar process of de-worlding (*Entweltlichung*) the world: "This manner of knowing them has the character of depriving the world of its worldhood in a definite way [*einer bestimmten Entweltlichung der Welt*]."[19] This conception of nature cannot explain the meaningful happening of world since it simultaneously leaps over and presupposes the phenomenon of world.

Instead, the handy (*zuhanden*) character of entities in our everyday concern is for Heidegger more originary than the knowing objectification of nature. The latter is a modification of the former, since cognition is a "founded mode" of being-in-the-world. Only by modifying our circumspective concern for and engagement with innerworldly beings does something like a theoretical investigation of entities *as natural entities* become possible. A science of nature must delimit a region of beings as objectively present. Nature is then understood as a thematization of the totality of beings made present for investigation; *Natur* becomes the object-domain of a *Naturwissenschaft*. In all of these uses of the term "nature" that directly identify it with an epistemological process of knowing the world as *Vorhanden*, Heidegger means something like nature in its post-Kantian sense, in its restriction to a relationship to the Kantian faculty of the understanding (*Verstand*) that makes possible and grounds the objective validity of claims of natural science.[20] But Heidegger denies that *Vorhandensein* is the primary mode of being of nature. Since the category of *Zuhandenheit* describes our primary mode of comportment toward innerworldly beings and *Vorhandenheit* must be understood as a modification of the former, then nature is primarily an object of practical engagement. Of course, we can always disengage our practical comportment, objectify a field of beings, and investigate it now through the theoretical attitude: "If

its kind of Being as ready-to-hand is disregarded, this 'Nature' itself can be discovered and defined simply in its pure presence-at-hand."[21] But nature is phenomenologically primarily an object of our practical engagement, and this is what Heidegger suggests by saying that nature is *Zuhanden*: "The wood is a forest of timber, the mountain a quarry of rock; the river is water-power, the wind is wind 'in the sails'"[22] Here the tool-character of nature comes to the fore, and nature is not fundamentally different in its mode of being from the equipment found in the workshop. The relationship of a farmer to her crop is not primarily one of objectification or theoretical investigation. The crop is a means of subsistence which is primarily encountered through its referential relation of "in-order-to," even if the very same crop can be made the objective domain of agronomical study. The *Zuhanden* relation to nature can be obscured by the objectification of nature on the part of the natural sciences.

Closely related to the category of *Vorhandenheit*, though, is an understanding of nature as *reality*. At times Heidegger suggests that reality is nothing other than objective presence: "Thereby the Being of what is proximally ready-to-hand gets passed over, and entities are first conceived as a context of Things (res) which are present-at-hand. 'Being' acquires the meaning of 'Reality.'"[23] At other times he differentiates the two, perhaps to reserve a more specific sense to the ontological problem of reality.[24] The question of reality seems to pose a difficult problem for Heidegger's early phenomenological ontology, since from the phenomenological perspective, the *vorhanden* is founded on the *zuhanden*, while from an ontological perspective of the substantial, it appears as if the reality of entities must have some priority. Even if nature is only accessed as *vorhanden* through a modification in Dasein's comportment, the natural entities encountered have a mode of existence prior to that encounter. This way of seeing all entities, including Dasein, as real and substantial leads to the sense that "the concept of reality has a peculiar priority in the ontological problematic."[25] But Heidegger immediately denies this priority as illusory, taking a more phenomenological approach that suggests that the reality one ascribes to entities or nature here is itself dependent on its space of appearing and accessibility, its showing up in the "world": "The real is essentially accessible only as entities within-the-world. All access to such entities is founded ontologically upon the basic state of Dasein, Being-in-the-world."[26] But while *access* depends on being-in-the-world, reality stubbornly seems to presuppose a sense of being prior to access since it suggests that entities exist beyond and before this access.

The problem of reality has produced numerous conflicting interpretations of the exact nature of Heidegger's realism or idealism. In ways analogous to Kant's transcendental idealism and empirical realism, Heidegger seems to present an *ontological idealism* coupled with an *ontic realism*—the being of beings is dependent on Dasein, but beings or entities themselves are not.

However, at an ontological level and without the methodological and epistemological reductions allowed for by Kant's and Husserl's transcendental idealisms, it becomes difficult to create a coherent reconstruction of the relationship between these two positions. On the one hand, Heidegger seems to make the independent existence of nature and entities nonsensical by correlating being to Dasein, as he does in the infamous passage in *Being and Time*: "Of course only as long as Dasein is (that is, only as long as an understanding of Being is ontically possible), 'is there' Being."[27] Commentators who stress such moments of being's *dependence* on Dasein in Heidegger's phenomenological period tend to read him as some form of transcendental idealist.[28] Other commentators correctly point out that any idealist or anti-realist interpretation of Heidegger cannot fully cohere with the several passages in which Heidegger defends the independent existence of entities from Dasein and an understanding of being.[29] While admitting that the ontological level is dependent on Dasein, Heidegger refuses to admit the same for entities: "But the fact that Reality is ontologically grounded in the Being of Dasein does not signify that only when Dasein exists and as long as Dasin exists, can the Real be as that which in itself it is."[30] Heidegger therefore explicitly insists on the fact that beings or entities remain in existence independent of our understanding of being: "Entities are, quite independently of the experience by which they are disclosed, the acquaintance in which they are discovered, and the grasping in which their nature is ascertained."[31] Heidegger not only introduces the ontological difference between being and beings in order to explain this relationship, but also suggestively admits that the *category of reality* does not exhaust the "the real": "As we have noted, being (not entities) is dependent upon the understanding of Being; that is to say, reality (not the real) is dependent upon care."[32]

But as still other commentators have shown, this appeal to a real beyond categorial reality, despite Heidegger's protests to the contrary, seems to return us to the problem of a thing in itself.[33] Heidegger wants to admit that nature as it is in itself, independent of our experience and cognition, exists on an ontic level. However, any claim to the effect that beings exist is dependent upon Dasein's understanding of being, so the former statement appears quite literally *incomprehensible*. In fact, it is not even properly incomprehensible, but would rather be a case for that which is non-sensical, since it is beyond the sphere of possible meaning and manifestation. And yet, he maintains that entities exist in a way that outstrips the sphere of meaningfulness. It appears impossible to solve these difficulties in a purely epistemological register, which is why Heidegger constantly maintained that the *epistemological* articulation of problem of realism and idealism was in some respects a false problem leading to false alternatives.[34] This difficulty becomes even more acute once we notice that Heidegger's account of nature in the twenties is

already pushing beyond the properly *categorial* understandings of nature that are articulated as presence at hand, readiness to hand, and reality.

Serious epistemological problems arise from the categorial understanding of nature, and this is the primary mode through which Heidegger thematizes entities unlike Dasein in *Being and Time*. However, a closer look at the texts suggest that Heidegger himself was aware of the severe limitations involved in offering only the two senses of nature: as an epistemological encounter with reality and objectivity and the primarily practical encounter with tools. In the very process of describing these two categorical modes of being of nature, Heidegger seems to introduce another way of understanding nature: "But when this happens [the understanding of nature as present-at-hand] the Nature which 'stirs and strives,' which assails us and enthralls us as landscape, remains hidden. The botanist's plants are not the flowers of the hedgerow."[35] The nature that overcomes (*überfällt*) us, that entrances (*fängt*), is not the objectively present nature of scientific study, but neither is it simply the forest as timber for human use. Here Heidegger seems to introduces a different mode of the being of nature, nature "as the *power of nature* [*als* Naturmacht],"[36] irreducible to either of the two categorial modes of the being of entities operative in *Being and Time*. Neither is this nature *for* human cognition, nor is it merely *for* human utility.

Heidegger is here admitting that the two categories for understanding the being of entities unlike Dasein are not exhaustive of our relation to nature. There is at least a third relation to nature that would neither objectify it nor use it, and as a *relation to* nature, this implies that there is a third mode of being of nature as an *innerworldly* being: "The 'Nature' by which we are 'surrounded' is, of course, an entity within-the-world; but the kind of Being which it shows belongs neither to the ready-to-hand nor to what is present-at-hand as 'Things of Nature.'"[37] When we encounter a landscape of subliminal proportions or experience the event of a natural disaster, our experience is distinguished from one we would have to a particular strain of viruses in a laboratory, or to a head of broccoli at the supermarket. This suggests that nature does not fit the twofold dimension of categorial determinations in *Being and Time*.[38] Furthermore, Heidegger noticed that the phenomenon of *life* does not seem to fit nicely into any dichotomy between Dasein and other existent entities. In *Being and Time*, one finds some enigmatic suggestions about the way in which life escapes the categorial determination of *Vorhandenheit* and yet cannot be properly understood as constitutive only of Dasein: "Life is not a mere Being-present-at-hand, nor is it Dasein."[39] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger enigmatically leaves this understanding of life without any further thematization, and it seems to escape any neat differentiation between Dasein and the *Vorhanden*. In a lecture course only two years later, Heidegger decides to

tackle the issue of the phenomenology of life and the problem of animality, a problem to which we will return in detail in the following section.

In addition to nature as the "power of nature" and as life, there is still another, more enigmatic, sense of nature alluded to in the early Heidegger. Unlike these other attempts at categorial differentiation of modes of access to innerworldly beings, Heidegger seems to describe nature in what may be called a non-categorial or pre-categorial. This would be nature as it exists ontically, prior to and independent of any phenomenological access. Nature lies at the limit of world since it is simultaneously within the world and un-worlded. We have already seen that Heidegger claims that "Nature is a limiting case of the being [*Grenzfall des Seins*] of possible entities within-the-world."[40] This mode of being, precisely because of this paradoxical existence beyond the phenomenon of world, is characterized as unmeaningful (*unsinnig*) and incomprehensible (*unverständlich*). However, this mode is never directly investigated as such, but is described and indicated in terms of the other senses of nature: "All entities whose kind of Being is of the character other than Dasein's must be conceived as unmeaning [*unsinniges*], essentially devoid of any meaning at all. . . . The present-at-hand, as Dasin encounters it, can, as it were, assault Dasein's Being; natural events [*Naturereignisse*], for instance, can break in upon us and destroy us."[41] These events of nature can happen suddenly and without warning, thereby entering the world from their "meaningless" existence to interrupt the innerworldly context of significance. This senseless existence of nature is not easily circumscribed by the categories of presence at hand or readiness to hand, and is clearly much closer to the third categorial determination of a "power" of nature. And yet Heidegger here describes this event of nature as present-at-hand. Clearly these events of nature *can* be described as objectively present or present-at-hand, we can determine how the plate tectonics must have been active in order to give rise to the earthquake, but is this the same as the experience of the earthquake as natural event? Is the world-entry of nature experienced as objective presence?

World-entry *can* be retrospectively described through categorial determination, but the categorial determination is precisely the attempt to render meaningful and comprehensible that which is first experienced as meaningless and incomprehensible. Heidegger alludes to this mode of being of nature when he claims: "*Nature is what is in principle explainable and to be explained* because it is in principle incomprehensible. It is the *incomprehensible pure and simple* [*sie ist* das Unverständliche schlechthin]. And it is the incomprehensible because it is the '*unworlded*' *world* [ent-weltlichte Welt], insofar as we take nature in this extreme sense of the entity as it is discovered in physics."[42] This is the mode of being of nature that can be properly called *non-* or *pre-categorial*, to signal that it cannot be reduced to the category of *Vorhandenheit* or any other category Heidegger proposes. It

can be subsumed under the categories, since once nature has "entered" the world, its relationship to Dasein can take at least one of the many modes we have described so far. But nature as the "incomprehensible pure and simple" marks its existence prior to world-entry, which is why Heidegger calls it the "unworlded world." Even though Heidegger mentions physics here, one should be careful about directly identifying this unworlded world and objective presence. Physics is the attempt to render comprehensible the incomprehensible, and thus a gap opens up between the categorial and non-categorial, analogous to the distinction between sense and reference: "It should be observed here that all propositions and proofs given in physics or mathematics are certainly comprehensible as propositions, as discourse about something, but that about which they speak [*aber das, worüber sie sprechen*] is itself the incomprehensible."[43] There is a distinction between the propositions of physics and mathematics, which, by their very nature as propositions, must be comprehensible, and *that about which* they are propositions. Nature is at the limit of world—both interior and exterior to world—*Vorhandenheit* is an objective determination of innerworldly objects that converts nature to intelligibility, but unworlded nature can become intelligible only because it is primarily and "in principle" the incomprehensible. On the one hand, comprehension and meaning are dependent on being-in-the-world, and it is this sphere through which Heidegger thematizes the properly *ontological* sense of being. However, nature seems to outstrip this sphere of comprehension, and thus to outstrip the correlation between Dasein and being: "Physical nature can only occur as innerworldly when world, i.e., Dasein, exists. This is not to say that nature cannot be in its own way [*in ihrer eigenen Weise sein*], without occurring within a world, without the existence of a human Dasein and thus without world."[44] But it is difficult to see what it would *mean* for nature to "be in its own way" beyond its occurrence within a world, since meaning is dependent on the very sphere that nature outstrips. Because of this, at other times Heidegger shrinks back from this insight and seems to recoil to a more Husserlian and phenomenological position, noticing that the positing of an existence beyond the sphere of comprehension and being simply reintroduces nature as a *thing in itself*. Thus he will also say that the independent existence of entities is literally non-sense, or beyond the distinction between the meaningful and the meaningless, since "only Dasein can be meaningful or meaningless."[45] Therefore, the problematic of nature and the notion of an ontic (although incomprehensible) mode existence outside of any relationship to Dasein seems to push Heidegger beyond the limits of both phenomenology and transcendental philosophy.

THE PROBLEM OF NATURE: WORLDLESSNESS, ANIMALITY, AND METONTOLOGY

Throughout the lecture courses that follow the publication of *Being and Time*, we find Heidegger struggling to include the concept of nature within his project of a phenomenological ontology. In these conceptual difficulties, one can sense that nature sets a kind of limit to his phenomenological way of thinking, and that Heidegger, against his more explicit intentions, threatens to reintroduce a dichotomy between world and nature, one reminiscent of the Kantian one we investigated in the first historical interlude. However, the dichotomy is in no way articulated by means of a distinction between the sensible and the intelligible world, or between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. True to the phenomenological turn, the dichotomy between "world" and "nature" is articulated by means of a distinction between the domain of that which is inherently *meaningful*, and that which is *meaningless* in itself. Heidegger distinguishes the world as the meaningful realm within which Dasein comports itself from nature: "The world is not nature . . . Nature—even if we take it in the sense of the whole cosmos as that which we also call, in ordinary discourse, the universe, the whole world—all these entities taken together, animals, plants, and humans, too, are not the world, viewed philosophically."[46] Dasein and world co-constitute this domain of meaningfulness, which means that there is no Dasein without world and no world without Dasein. As we have seen, this leaves entities that do not have the mode of being of Dasein as barren of meaning in themselves, since "all entities whose kind of Being is of a character other than Dasein's must be conceived as unmeaning [*unsinniges*]."[47] Throughout the lecture courses of the late twenties, Heidegger is constantly identifying this unmeaningful sphere with nature and contrasting it to the meaningful space within which Dasein moves about. Heidegger is noticeably dissatisfied with this dichotomy, and as he continues to think through it we find that the problem of nature contributes to the dissolution of Heidegger's project of a phenomenological ontology.

The worldlessness that pertains to entities unlike Dasein is not to be understood as something that is imposed upon them, as something that happens to them "from outside," so to speak. Already in *Being and Time*, Heidegger speaks of entities present-at-hand, unlike Dasein, as entities that "are worldless in themselves [*an ihnen selbst weltlos sind*]."[48] In the lecture course following the publication of *Being and Time*, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, we find Heidegger vacillating between two senses of nature, one that is innerworldly and conforms to the senses of nature we outlined in the previous section, and one in which nature seems to outstrip the sphere of meaningfulness we call the world. In the latter sense nature takes on the

meaning of something that in itself withdraws from meaningfulness, but that can be uncovered as meaningful when it enters into the context of signification and relates itself to the being-in-the-world of Dasein. Thus, Heidegger begins by suggesting that nature is an innerworldly entity: "An example of an innerworldly entity is nature [*Innerweltlich Seiendes ist z. B. die Natur*],"[49] while immediately adding the complication that "innerworldliness does not belong to nature's being."[50] One way of articulating the claim that nature is not in itself innerworldly is to suggest that nature can exist both within the world and outside the world, or within the meaningful sphere and beyond it: "World is only, if, and as long as a Dasein exists. Nature can also be when no Dasein exists."[51] This means that while worldlessness is an inherent determination of nature, innerworldliness is something that may or may not "happen" to nature: "Being within the world *devolves upon* this being, nature, [*Innerweltlichkeit* fällt *diesem Seienden, der Natur,*] solely when it is *uncovered* as a being. Being within the world does not *have* to devolve upon nature as a determination."[52]

What does it mean exactly to claim that nature is worldless in itself? And what sphere or mode of beings is Heidegger thereby delimiting by the term nature? Does it include nonliving beings, artifacts, and living beings? After all, we have already seen that Heidegger admits, in a passing remark in *Being and Time*, that life presents a problem for the distinction between beings who inhabit the sphere of meaning fully (Dasein) and those that do not, as it seems to occupy the neither/nor of an intermediate space between the "Dasein-ish" and the categorial. These sets of questions led Heidegger to undergo a thorough investigation, in the 1929–1930 lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, of the ways in which stones, animals, and Dasein relate to his conception of "World." Here Heidegger presents what he calls a "comparative examination" regarding the concept of world, guided by three related theses: "[1.] the stone (material object) is worldless [*weltlos*]; [2.] the animal is poor in world [*weltarm*]; [3.] man is world-forming [*weltbildend*]."[53] Here it becomes clear that what is worldless is not nature in general, but inanimate nature, including entities that are merely physical and chemical, but not living. This comparative examination is analogous to what Hegel undertook in his account of life and organic nature, in that it concludes by specifying different degrees or levels of possible habitation within the world of meaning. For Heidegger, the "stone is without world [*ohne Welt*]"[54] because it does not relate to entities as entities, it does not have a meaningful relationship to its environment and to the events and occurrences that happen to it. He gives the example of a stone lying on the earth, and wonders whether or not it experiences such "lying" as a form of touching: "It lies upon the earth but does not touch it. The earth is not given for the stone as an underlying support which bears it, let alone given as earth."[55] The stone does not have

access to entities as entities, meaning that if it lies on the earth or on a chair, in no way does it phenomenally experience them *as* earth or *as* chair.

The human, as Dasein, is in the world in a full manner, which Heidegger designates here through the terminology of world-formation. This means, first of all, that Dasein can relate to entities as entities, that it inhabits a world in such a manner that it lets entities be the entities that they are. This relationship Heidegger calls a "comportment [*Verhalten*]"[56] toward entities, which involves the as-structure of understanding and interpretation. Furthermore, Dasein is not simply related to entities, does not simply relate to rocks *as* rocks and chairs *as* chairs, but does so while simultaneously and in the background maintaining a relationship to beings as a whole, to the world: "Dasein sets us ourselves before beings as a whole [*das Seiende im Ganzen*]. In attunement we are in such and such a way: this therefore implies that attunement precisely makes *beings as a whole* manifest and makes us manifest to ourselves as disposed in the midst of these beings."[57] Dasein is world-forming because being-in-the-world is constitutive of its mode of being. And the world is not simply the environment of our circumspective concern, not the totality of spatio-temporal objects, but a certain meaningful whole towards which we are oriented. This wholeness, which characterizes something specific about human Dasein's comportment, is critical for Heidegger's understanding of the world. He defines the world in this text in the following manner: "World is not the totality of beings, is not the accessibility of beings as such, not the manifestness of beings as such that lies at the basis of this accessibility—world is rather the *manifestness of beings as such as a whole* [*Welt ist* die Offenbarkeit des Seienden als solchen im Ganzen]."[58] The three aspects must be present: a certain uncovering, openness, or *manifestness* of the phenomena, the comportment or relational *as such*, and the holistic tendency of Dasein's relationship to the world *as a whole*. This threefold structure is lacking both in the stone, and in the animal, which leads Heidegger to suggest that in this fullest sense of the term, "neither the stone nor the animal has world."[59]

The way in which the animal lacks the world, as world-poor, however, must be differentiated from the stone's radical worldlessness. Animal life as an intermediary offers some more serious difficulties for Heidegger's distinction between Dasein as an entity that is inherently within the world and stones and other material objects as without world.[60] The animal's world-poverty is phenomenologically developed through a privative analysis in relation to Dasein, an analysis that has led many interpreters to accuse Heidegger of anthropocentric tendencies.[61] Heidegger believes that when compared to Dasein there is something deficient in the "as-structure" (*als-Struktur*) of the animal, even if this deficiency is not to be understood as an absolute privation. While the animal is not world-forming, it does have a mode of access to entities—and entities are actually phenomenologically "given" to the animal: "whatever the

lizard is lying on is certainly given *in some way* for the lizard, and yet is not known to the lizard *as* a rock."[62] Heidegger thus contrasts the way in which a stone may simply lie upon the earth with the way in which a lizard may "bask in the sun" on top of a large warm rock. Clearly the lizard has a relationship to this rock that is entirely different from the one the stone has to the earth. Animals have distinct relationships to their environments, treating entities in a manner that is fairly close to *Zuhandenheit*. Just as I may see a hammer *as* a hammer, my dog may see it instinctively *as* object-to-be-chewed. However, as Derrida,[63] Calarco,[64] and others have argued, Heidegger is unable to successfully articulate these distinctions. He notices that animality transcends *Vorhandenheit*, but cannot find a way to determine its relationship to Dasein other than through privation and comparison. In the end, the seminar concludes aporetically, showing the extent to which animality is an impasse to the distinctions essential to his fundamental ontology: "Thus the thesis that 'the animal is poor in world' must remain as a problem."[65]

It is arguable that the problem of animality brings to Heidegger's fundamental ontology the implicit threat of naturalism, of naturalizing the distinction between Dasein and nature. This is because the distinction between the facticity of Dasein and the factuality of nature is blurred by the addition of a previously excluded middle. Animals are clearly a part of nature, and yet they do not necessarily fit the categories of *Vorhandeheit* or *Zuhandenheit*, challenging the notion that nature is even appropriately determined by these categories. Furthermore, if animals are to some extent in a world, then Dasein is not as distinctive and unique as it would appear from the analytic of Dasein in *Being and Time*. More importantly, what the question of animality brings with it is the threat of something like gradualism—the idea that one can be more- or less- "Dasein-ish," that one can be "in" a world to different degrees. If that is the case, then Dasein's ontological possibilities can be ontically reinterpreted as capacities or dispositional properties of particular kinds of entities within a natural cosmos. Not only are "animals" poor in world, but many human animals can be poor in world, such as children or the mentally disabled, or perhaps even the severely drunk or sleeping. The problem of world-poverty and the privative interpretation that goes along with it could be equally applied, mutatis mutandis, to infants or to humans with specific types of neurological disorders. This is a problem Heidegger briefly acknowledged in his treatment of young Dasein in the 1928–1929 winter semester lecture course in Freiburg.[66] Heidegger wonders about the challenges inherent to understanding early and young forms of Dasein in the fundamental-ontological manner, and how to appropriately treat a mode of being that is not-quite Dasein but already includes several aspects of comportment and understanding of being. As Andrew Mitchell notes, "the similarities with the treatment

of the animal are striking."[67] The relationships between Dasein and humans, between Dasein and other animals, and between Dasein and nature become much more difficult to clearly delineate once one acknowledges that there is a serious methodological problem in the constitution of different levels and modes of Dasein itself. If the capacity to have an understanding of being and of effectuating the ontological difference can happen to different degrees, it could potentially be explainable as an ontic capacity embedded in our material nature.

In differentiating between the stone and the animal, Heidegger uses a strategy that we have seen in Hegel's philosophy of nature and in his reconciliation between nature and spirit. One wonders whether Heidegger's own use of the stone in contrast to the animal as an example is meant to recall Hegel's stone in the *Science of Logic*. Remember that Hegel differentiates between the stone and life by arguing that "because the stone does not think, does not even feel, its limitedness is not a limitation *for it*"[68] whereas "the sentient creature . . . feels *pain*, and it is the privilege of the sentient nature to feel pain; it is a negation in its *self*."[69] For Heidegger, similarly, the stone is worldless in itself in a manner that even that worldlessness is not experienced as a deprivation. It cannot even properly be called a "not-having." The animal, however, can be called *weltarm*, poor or lacking in world, since it already has some relationship to its environment, but one imbued by a certain not-having. As Heidegger puts it: "the not-having of world is not merely a case of having less of world in comparison with man, but rather a case of not having at all—but this now in the sense of not-*having*, i.e., on the basis of a having. By contrast, we cannot even ascribe such not-having to the stone."[70] Recall that Hegel resolved this problem by means of recourse to the idea, and to the notion that the idea as negative self-relation manifests itself to different degrees in the domains of nature, life, and spirit. Heidegger does not have recourse to such an objective idealism, nor to something analogous that would connect the breach created by the domain of meaningfulness called world and the entities completely bereft of world—worldless natural entities. Because of this, the problem of animality, as an in-between stage, is much more difficult to reconcile from within the parameters of the project of fundamental ontology outlined in *Being and Time*. It is therefore no coincidence that by the end of the lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, immediately following the aporetic account of animality and the discussion of Dasein and world-formation, Heidegger questions the viability of that very project: "We must unfold this problem *still more* radically, with the danger of arriving at a position where we *must reject all ontology in its very idea as an inadequate metaphysical problematic.*"[71] What such a radicalization looks like, and how ontology must be abandoned will be treated in more detail in the following section.

Before doing so, we must turn to one more way in which the problem of nature shows up for Heidegger in the lecture courses of the late twenties, and that is through the problem of what he calls *metontology*. Metontology is another way in which the fundamental distinctions of *Being and Time* are pushed to their limits, and with it the project of a fundamental ontology grounded in phenomenology. At the very end of *Being and Time*, Heidegger himself already foresaw that the fundamental distinction between the mode of being of Dasein and the mode of being of entities unlike Dasein is not something we should reify, and that even if this distinction is crucial for his project therein, it may show itself to be inadequate. As he states: "The distinction between the Being of existing Dasein and the Being of entities, such as Reality, which do not have the character of Dasein, may appear illuminating; but it is still only the point of departure for the ontological problematic; it is nothing with which philosophy may tranquilize itself."[72] In the set of questions that leads to this statement of caution, Heidegger wonders whether philosophy can "provide *ontological* grounds for ontology, or does it also require an *ontical* foundation?"[73] He turns to this set of concerns in an important appendix to his 1928 seminar on the *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Here Heidegger notes that the concept of world developed within fundamental ontology leads to a necessary "overturning [*Umschlag*]."[74] This overturning is not simply a change in focus or understanding of ontology, as if we should now turn to an ontic metaphysics because we have exhausted the resources of fundamental ontology. Rather, he sees fundamental ontology and a new "metontology" as complementary sciences, with the former developing necessarily into the latter: "precisely the radicalization of fundamental ontology brings about the above-mentioned overturning [*Umschlag*] of ontology out of its very self."[75] In what does this overturning consist? Precisely in going beyond the radical distinction between Dasein and nature that was determinative for fundamental ontology, and in further investigating the ontic existence Dasein shares with other extant entities in a more primordial manner:

> Since being is there only insofar as beings are already [in the] there [*Da es Sein nur gibt, indem auch schon gerade Seiendes im Da ist*], fundamental ontology has in it the latent tendency towards a primordial, metaphysical transformation which becomes possible only when being is understood in its whole problematic. The intrinsic necessity for ontology to turn back to its point of origin can be clarified by reference to the primal phenomenon of human existence: the being "man" understands being; understanding-of-being effects a distinction between being and beings; being is there only when Dasein understands being.[76]

The transformation from fundamental ontology to metontology involves noticing that even though the ontological difference between being and

beings only happens if and as long as Dasein is, all of this is simultaneously dependent on ontic existence. There is a strange circularity here: even though the distinction between being and beings only happens if Dasein exists in a manner different from entities, Dasein can only exist in this way and have an understanding of being "insofar as beings are already there [*indem auch schon gerade Seiendes im Da ist*]."[77]

What does this overturning have to do with nature? Heidegger is suggesting that we think of Dasein as one entity among others that factically happens to have an ontological tendency. The dichotomy between the facticity of Dasein and the factuality of nature is here going to break down, and this becomes clear when Heidegger uses the term facticity for the type of being of nature, a term he earlier reserved only for Dasein. In *Being and Time*, the term facticity is rigorously and exclusively reserved for the mode of being of Dasein, and Heidegger explicitly distinguishes between the *facticity* (*Faktizität*) of Dasein and the *factuality* (*Tatsächlichkeit*) of nature: "Dasein's facticity, however, is essentially distinct from the factuality of something present-at-hand."[78] This important moment is obscured by the translation, which, in line with Heidegger's earlier claims, insists on differentiating factical and factual, hoping that this is simply a momentary terminological slip:

> In other words, the possibility that being is there in the understanding presupposes the factical existence of Dasein [*die faktische Existenz des Daseins*], and this in turn presupposes the factual extantness of nature [*das faktische Vorhandensein des Natur*]. Right within the horizon of the problem of being, when posed radically, it appears that all this is visible and can become understood as being, only if a possible totality of beings is already there.[79]

This statement would have been unthinkable in *Being and Time*, since here Heidegger is not only "equivocating" between the type of being of nature and that of Dasein, but also claiming that the facticity of Dasein presupposes the facticity of nature. The suggestion is that beyond the *difference* between Dasein's *Existenz* and nature's *Vorhandensein*, there is a factical (*faktische*) mode of being that they share. Furthermore, fundamental ontology is said to depend on an understanding of "a possible totality of beings [*eine mögliche Totalität von Seiendem*]," once again precisely the type of move that he criticized under the name of "traditional" ontology.

What we get here is an overturning of fundamental ontology that is strikingly similar, albeit within phenomenology, of Schelling's complementarity between transcendental idealism and *Naturphilosophie*.[80] Alongside a phenomenological ontology that investigates the space of meaningfulness from within the parameters of the way in which the world is given to Dasein, there is the necessity for an investigation of the nature as a whole: "As a result, we

need a special problematic which has for its theme beings as a whole [*das Seiende im Ganzen*]."[81] The entire project of metaphysics is now comprised of two different projects, first, the one developed through the analytic of Dasein in *Being and Time*, second, through this new metontological endeavor: "In their unity, fundamental ontology and metontology constitute the concept of metaphysics."[82] To some extent, the lecture course of 1929–1930 can be seen as a preparatory analysis for the thinking of this metaphysical conception of world as "beings as a whole" in contradistinction to the being-in-the-world developed in *Being and Time*. However, since that project also ends aporetically, with a call toward the overturning of ontology, it can be said that this was a false step, or perhaps a *Holzweg*, within Heidegger's philosophical path. Be that as it may, what these seminars show is that Heidegger was continually attempting to think through the problem of nature, and to question the distinction between the meaningful world that Dasein inhabits and the mode of being of nature. Such a thinking leads him, in the end, to abandon the project of a fundamental ontology as it is presented in *Being and Time*, and this abandonment should be seen as intimately tied to the problem of nature.[83]

The problem being developed here regards the extent to which nature can be rendered intelligible within Heidegger's phenomenological ontology, and to what extent nature can be seen as a limit to intelligibility as such. We saw that for Hegel's understanding of the idea, nature was partially intelligible, but that in the end the concept of intelligibility holds all the ontological weight, such that to be is, *in truth*, to be intelligible. Since, for Heidegger, nature poses itself as a problem for intelligibility and for fundamental ontology, one will not be surprised if a rethinking of nature will involve a rethinking of the intimate relationship between being and intelligibility, between being and being-known. How are we to think ontologically about something that in itself resists intelligibility, without reducing it to some sense of non-existence, as Hegel did? Heidegger's turn to this thorny question involves a fundamental rethinking of the notion of nature, and together with it the abandonment of a fundamental ontology founded primarily in that which shows itself and manifests itself to Dasein. It involves a recovery of that which fundamentally does not show itself, and a recovery of the pre-Socratic sense of *phusis* that, in Heraclitus's famous aphorism, "loves to hide itself [*kruptesthai philei*]"[84] In the following two sections, we will develop these sets of concerns, first by turning to Heidegger's rethinking of the world and metaphysics, then to his deepening appreciation for the concept of nature as it has developed historically and metaphysically in what he comes to call the history of Being as metaphysics.

FROM THE METAPHYSICS OF DASEIN TO THE HISTORY OF BEING

However, before turning directly to Heidegger's rethinking of nature in the nineteen thirties, I hope to first investigate the important transformation regarding the concept of the world that, together with his estimation and evaluation of metaphysics, happens from the period following *Being and Time* to Heidegger's account of the history of Being as metaphysics in the work of the thirties and forties. Since this transformation of the concept of world happens simultaneously with his rethinking of the concept of nature, one finds these two terms taking on different senses that implicate one another from the early, phenomenological period, to Heidegger's more mature or so-called "late" writings.[85] Roughly speaking, while in the later work we find Heidegger seeking to uncover the grounds of metaphysics from within the history of being, and ultimately pointing toward an overcoming of metaphysics in a thinking of being that is no longer metaphysical, in the Heidegger from the period of roughly 1927–1930 we see metaphysics, and a metaphysics of Dasein, as largely coextensive and continuous with the project of *Being and Time*'s fundamental ontology. Thus, in his 1929 *Kantbuch*, Heidegger directly relates the project of a metaphysics of Dasein, to the grounding of metaphysics and to fundamental ontology in the following manner:

> The Metaphysics of Dasein, guided by the question of ground-laying, should unveil the constitution of the Being of Dasein in such a way that this becomes visible as the inner making-possible of the understanding of Being. The unveiling of the constitution of Being of Dasein is Ontology. Insofar as the ground for the possibility of metaphysics is found therein—the finitude of Dasein as its fundament—it is called Fundamental Ontology.[86]

Thus, insofar as Dasein is the being who understands being, and insofar as being is the being of beings as a whole, Dasein is the site for the occurrence of fundamental ontology, and thereby the ground of metaphysics. Picking up on Kant's claim about a natural dialectic of human reason, Heidegger sees Dasein as not so much a rational animal, but as the *metaphysical* animal.

Within this project of a metaphysics of Dasein, it is actually quite difficult to differentiate between the concepts of being, world, and Dasein, and some commentators have taken them to be almost synonymous terms in the early Heidegger.[87] This is due to the fact that at times Heidegger explains Dasein's metaphysical tendency through the language of an understanding of being, and at other times through the language of world-formation. But the relationship described is one and the same. Dasein is a being who inhabits a world in such a way that it always possesses an understanding of being. This

understanding of being surpasses beings or entities toward the being of beings or entities. But this concept of the being of entities is also designated as "the manifestness of beings as such and as a whole,"[88] which is Heidegger's exact definition of world in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. The same terms are used to define metaphysics within the same text: "Metaphysics is a questioning in which we inquire into beings as a whole and inquire in such a way that in so doing we ourselves, the questioners, are thereby also included in the question, placed into question."[89] Thus the question about beings as a whole, together with the question about the being (Dasein) who inquires about such a whole, form the project of a metaphysics of Dasein. As he puts it in his lecture "What is Metaphysics?": "Metaphysics is inquiry beyond or over beings, which aims to recover them as such and as a whole for our grasp."[90]

The "beyond" he is interested in here, which is his interpretation of the *meta-* in *meta*physics, is not simply a going beyond to the supersensible, but an overshooting of entities, of the ontic level, toward their ontological truth. Since this "going beyond" happens only as long as Dasein is, and is thereby fundamentally dependent on Dasein, metaphysics and Dasein become almost synonymous themselves: "Going beyond beings occurs in the essence of Dasein. But this going beyond is metaphysics itself. . . . Metaphysics is the basic occurrence of Dasein. It is Dasein itself [*Sie ist das Dasein selbst*]."[91] Another name for this "going beyond" that Heidegger uses in contemporaneous texts is Dasein's *transcendence*.[92] Insofar as Dasein projects an understanding of being, it transcends entities toward the being of those very entities. The concept of transcendence thus gathers together Dasein's understanding of being and the projective aspect Heidegger at other times calls world-formation: "This projection of world also always *casts* the projected world *over* beings. This prior casting-over first makes it possible for beings as such to manifest themselves."[93] Throughout this period, Heidegger investigates several fundamental modes of attunement (*Grundstimmungen*) that open Dasein up to the manifestness of the world as such and as a whole. He famously shows how both anxiety and boredom are capable of removing Dasein from its everyday concerns with entities and their significance, and making explicit a prior relationship to the world as such that lies hidden behind such everyday dealings. In all of these phenomenological analyses, the goal is to make manifest this prior domain that opens up meaningfulness, one that Heidegger calls being or world. In making such a prior space manifest, one opens up the possibility of seeing the ways in which Dasein is an inherently metaphysical animal, one that always already operates with a background openness to the world as such and as a whole.

But as we glimpsed at the end of the previous section, Heidegger comes to see the very project of fundamental ontology, and thus of a metaphysics of Dasein as well, as insufficiently radical. Thus, beginning in the early thirties,

Heidegger attempts to move away from what he calls the guiding question of metaphysics toward the grounding question of the truth of beings, and thus to a ground of metaphysics that may lie deeper than metaphysics itself. This shift in focus is particularly visible in a 1949 introduction to his 1929 lecture "What is Metaphysics," in which he revisits the answers given in the lecture in light of his later rethinking of the history of metaphysics. Heidegger does this by working through an image of Descartes's, in which the entirety of philosophical knowledge is likened to a tree whose "trunk is physics" and whose "roots are metaphysics."[94] Instead of asking what the roots are, and about the nature of those very roots, Heidegger wants to dig deeper into its very ground and ask: "Out of what ground do the roots, and thereby the whole tree, receive their nourishing juices and strength?"[95] We already see Heidegger asking the question regarding the earth, the soil, out of which the metaphysics comes to be. The question regarding the very ground of metaphysics itself is not to be understood as just another metaphysical question: "Metaphysics thinking beings as beings [*das Seiende als das Seiende*]. Wherever the question is asked what beings are, beings as such are in sight. Metaphysical representation owes this sight to the light of Being. The light itself, i.e., that which such thinking experiences as light, no longer comes within the range of metaphysical thinking."[96] If metaphysics in some way brings beings as such into the light, into the open, it does not investigate the relationship of lighting up that is a certain kind of condition of possibility for metaphysics itself. This lighting up or clearing of beings that allows them to be the beings that they are is a state of what he calls "unconcealedness [*Unverborgenheit*]"[97] as a translation of the Greek word for truth, *aletheia*.

Therefore, whereas metaphysics presupposes a kind of "coming into the light" of beings as such and as a whole, it does not directly investigate this revealing which is its condition of possibility and its ground. In other words, metaphysics presupposes the truth of beings but does not turn its questioning gaze upon this truth as truth: "Being in its essence as revealing [*entbergenden Wesen*], i.e., in its truth, is not thought. . . . The truth of Being may thus be called the ground in which metaphysics, as the root of the tree of philosophy, is kept and from which it is nourished."[98] Metaphysics leaves its ground unthought, just as Descartes did not inquire about the soil that nourishes the roots of the tree and therefore the entire tree itself. This means that, for Heidegger, philosophy operates within the sphere of the tree, so to speak, but does not ask a further question of what makes such a tree possible. Something is therefore operative within metaphysics that is hidden from metaphysics itself as its presupposition: "Philosophy does not gather itself upon its ground. It always leaves its ground—leaves it by means of metaphysics. And yet it never escapes its ground."[99] The thinking that Heidegger is here proposing, the thinking of the truth of Being, goes beyond metaphysics to

its ground, and thereby in a certain way leaves metaphysics, and philosophy itself, behind. This means that, in a certain manner that will have to be specified later, "when we think the truth of Being, metaphysics is overcome [*überwunden*]."[100] We see that by this point, Heidegger is far from the project of a phenomenological ontology, insofar as he is questioning the very conditions of possibility of any ontology at all: "the attempt to recall the truth of Being, as a going back into the ground of metaphysics, has already left the realm of all ontology with its very first step."[101]

Readers of *Being and Time* may be left perplexed—did not Heidegger already think of the truth of Being in §44 of that work? Did he not thereby already see that there is a ground that lies deeper than all metaphysics, and thereby than all ontology? In that early work we already find Heidegger criticizing the traditional view of truth as a mode of correspondence between a thought in the mind and the entity in the world, and laying bare a deeper mode of uncoveredness (*Entdeckheit*) and disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*).[102] Furthermore, he directly links this understanding of truth to the Greek *aletheia*, whose hiddenness and forgotteness (lethe) still echoes in the "*decken"* and "*schließen"* of the German *Entdecktheit* and *Erschlossenheit*, or in the "cover" and "closed" of the English "uncoveredness" and "disclosedness." However, the tendency of the interpretation is everywhere toward that which is cleared or lit up, toward what is disclosed and made manifest into the world as the sphere in which meaning takes place. The hidden aspect of the relationship is mentioned, but not investigated directly or in any radical way. In his 1930 essay "On the Essence of Truth," Heidegger turns to this concealing aspect more explicitly, stating that "concealment preserves what is most proper to *alētheia* as its own."[103] Unlike his earlier analysis, in which the concealment could be understood as a merely ontic affair, here the concealment is structurally bound to the bringing into the light that characterizes truth as unconcealment. That is, Heidegger is no primarily interested in the way in which entities are brought forth from their unconcealment into the world, or the way in which world makes manifest entities that can or cannot inhabit the world as present-at-hand or ready-to-hand. Instead, he is concerned with a certain relationship of concealment that pertains to the world as such and as a whole: "The concealment of beings as a whole, un-truth proper, is older than every openedness of this or that being. It is older even than letting-be itself, which in disclosing already holds concealed and comports itself toward concealing."[104] Untruth and concealment become at the very least equiprimordial with all truth and unconcealment, and perhaps even "older" and more fundamental.

What was earlier thought in terms of being and world, namely, the manifestness of beings as such and as a whole, must now take on a character of something that in becoming manifest also fundamentally hides itself. We

thus have an ontological form of non-manifestness, or a withdrawal from meaningfulness and manifestation: "In letting beings as a whole be, which discloses and at the same time conceals, it happens that concealing appears as what is first of all concealed."[105] This means that the double relationship of truth, as both disclosing and concealing, in some manner veils itself such that the concealing aspect is itself concealed. In other words, in making room for manifestness as such, something withdraws from the relationship and hides, and this withdrawal is left unthought by metaphysics because it conceals itself. Within its metaphysical determination, truth comes to mean primarily what comes to light, what is lighted up, but the relationship between concealment and unconcealment that pertains to truth is buried by metaphysics. This means that while metaphysics operates within the domain for the truth of being, there is an aspect of that truth, the concealing aspect, that itself remains concealed: "Meanwhile the truth of Being has remained concealed from metaphysics during its long history from Anaximander to Nietzsche."[106] Heidegger's project now becomes a rethinking of this history of metaphysics in light of what it is that it conceals and leaves unthought, namely, the very ground of metaphysics itself.

Beginning roughly around 1935, Heidegger comes to think about the history of metaphysics as a history of several interpretations of the beingness of beings that grounds each epoch in the history of being. This means that in each historical configuration, a particular interpretation of being takes on a totalizing hold on what it means for something to exist. The totality of beings is somehow determined beforehand, through a kind of historical a priori that functions as a condition of possibility for anything to appear as something at all: "In metaphysics, reflection on the essence of beings and a decision concerning the essence of truth is accomplished. Metaphysics grounds an age in that, through a particular interpretation of beings and through a particular comprehension of truth, it provides that age with the ground of its essential shape."[107] While Heidegger speaks here of a "decision," this should not be understood simply subjectively, as if particular philosophical thinkers "decided" to interpret being in a certain way, and that through societal influence, such an understanding took hold of the "age." Rather, by thinking through certain paradigmatic thinkers of an age, one can uncover something like the "essence" or "essential shape" of that age in its prevailing metaphysics: "metaphysics is thought as the truth of what is as such in its entirety [*des Seienden als solchen im Ganzen*], and not as the doctrine of any particular thinker."[108] Therefore, each "age" or "epoch" has its own metaphysics, or its own ontology, since the goal of metaphysics is "to represent what is as what is. Any metaphysical thinking is onto-logy or it is nothing at all."[109] What can show up as meaningful, and how that meaningfulness is determined, is grounded in the age's particular metaphysics. Thus what Heidegger

previously understood as the world, as the manifestness of beings as such and as a whole, is a particular configuration of an age's metaphysics. Each age, one may say with a certain degree of caution, can be said to build its own "world."

If each metaphysical epoch predetermines a certain understanding of truth and of what is, it does so by necessarily ignoring the more fundamental domain of that which allows for such a determination. As we have seen, an aspect of the truth of being withdraws from manifestation, and this withdrawal is itself concealed by each metaphysical determination: "In the history of Western thinking, indeed continually from the beginning, what is, is thought in reference to Being; yet the truth of Being remains unthought, and not only is that truth denied to thinking as a possible experience, but Western thinking itself, and indeed in the form of metaphysics, expressly, but nevertheless unknowingly, veils the happening of that denial."[110] Heidegger therefore adds a third dimension to the twofold relationship he had earlier designated by the ontological difference between being and beings, between the world and the entities meaningfully disclosed therein. This means, importantly for our purposes, that "being" and "world" can no longer be used almost interchangeably. In each metaphysical epoch, a certain ontological grounding is effected, but in such a manner that what he calls "being itself" or "being as being" does not show up: "Because metaphysics interrogates beings as beings [*das Seiende als das Seiende*], it remains concerned with beings and does not turn itself to Being as Being [*das Sein als Sein*]."[111] This domain of "being as being," and of the "truth of being," harbors within itself something that withdraws and hides in each metaphysical epochal constellation. This marks a transformation from the project of *Being and Time*, wherein Heidegger explicitly maintains that "Being is always the Being of an entity [*Sein ist jeweils das Sein eines Seienden*]."[112] Being now means for Heidegger not simply the "being of beings," but must include that which also partially hides itself as it grants each configuration of beings as a whole to a metaphysical age. This means that metaphysics "thinks Being only by representing beings as beings. It means beings as a whole, although it speaks of Being. It names Being and means beings as beings [*das Seiende als das Seiende*]."[113] This fundamental neglect is not, as we have seen, simply a fortuitous error on the part of metaphysicians, but is an event of world-historical repercussions for Heidegger, as we will see in the following section.

The history of metaphysics can be seen as a history of principles that govern what is, but which hide something unprincipled from which it springs. These principles ground in a twofold manner, a manner that Heidegger describes through the claim that metaphysics is onto-theo-logical:

> Metaphysics always represents beings as such in their totality; it represents the beingness of beings [*die Seiendheit des Seienden*] (the *ousia* of the *on*). But metaphysics represents the beingness of beings in a twofold manner: in the first place, the totality of beings as such with an eye to their most universal traits (*on kathalou, koinon*); but at the same time also the totality of beings as such in the sense of the highest and therefore divine being (*on katholou, akrotaton, theion*).[114]

In the former sense, in determining the beingness of beings by reference to their most universal traits, it is ontology. But in the latter sense, by reference to a paradigmatic entity that both determines the highest sense of what it means "to be" and sometimes operates as a highest ground of beingness, it is theological.[115] While the most obvious of such configurations can be found in medieval theology, in the notion that all being are *ens creatum* in a universal sense and grounded in God as *causa sui* in the highest sense, Heidegger does not have a restricted understanding of this onto-theological constitution of metaphysics. Rather, it governs everywhere that metaphysics is operative, even in the absence of what might appear to be an explicitly theological deity. In all metaphysical configurations, from the paganism of the Ancient Greeks to the godless world of modern technology, metaphysics contains this twofold character. Even if one determines the ontological constitution of what is in a physicalist way, as matter in motion, one still has recourse to a highest being that exists, for example, the whole of the cosmos or the universe. This twofold character should remind us of the definition of world in *Fundamental Concept of Metaphysics*, as having both the manifestness of being *as such* in view, and of beings *as a whole*: "Metaphysics thinks of beings as such, that is, in general. Metaphysics thinks of beings as such, as a whole. Metaphysics thinks of the Being of beings both in the ground-giving unity of what is most general, what is indifferently valid everywhere, and also in the unity of all that accounts for the ground, that is, of the All-Highest."[116] This "ground-giving unity" of metaphysics in its twofold character serves as a support and ground for an understanding of everything that is said to exist.

Each metaphysical constellation can be seen as a kind of ultimate ground (*Grund*) that veils the abyss (*Abgrund*) from which it arises. The beingness of beings posited by metaphysics is made possible through a disavowal of the fundamentally abysmal character of being. All grounds are a betrayal, so to speak, of a deeper *Abgrund*: "Being offers us no ground and no basis—as beings do—to which we can turn, on which we can build, and to which we can cling. Being is the rejection [*Ab-sage*] of the role of such grounding; it renounces all grounding, is abyssal [*ab-gründing*]."[117] However, Heidegger makes a distinction between what is groundless in an abysmal sense, *Ab-grund*, and what is un-grounded or radically without ground,

un-grund und grundlos. The groundless character of being lies in the fact that it cannot be self-determining and self-grounding, that there is something irreducible that withdraws from intelligibility at its basis. This is what Reiner Schürmann has interpreted as a kind of *anarchic* origin at the center of Heidegger's thinking of Being.[118] But this anarchy at the origin is not the anarchy of an "anything goes," as if the principles of metaphysics were radically contingent: "The open of the ab-ground [*Ab-grundes*] is not groundless [*grundlos*]."[119] Instead, it is a fundamental refusal, withdrawal, and sheltering[120] inherent in the openness of Being that attests to an abyss at the source of every ground-giving. Heidegger claims that metaphysical grounding can only happen at the expense of a betrayal of this groundless ground, and each metaphysical epoch has a principle that governs it as its own singular form of betrayal. Metaphysics, insofar as it gives a ground to beings as a whole and offers them support, is to a large extent a fleeing from an anarchic origin into the apparent stability of principles and grounds.

What does this "history" actually look like? Heidegger traces the history of being as a chronological series of fundamental "words" for the beingness of beings. Each of these words take the place of being and describe one foundational way in which the history of the west has sought to determine the truth of all that is. This history is read by interpreting thinkers that are held to be decisive and paradigmatic for such a history, and finding within their texts a particular word or concept that functions as a foundation for all others. Sometimes Heidegger will offer a comprehensive list of such words or concepts, beginning with the pre-Socratics, and moving through Greek philosophy, Medieval philosophy, through early modernity, all the way to the present. Here is an example of such a more or less exhaustive list, which he presents in "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics": *Aletheia*, *Physis*, *Ousia*, *Idea*, *Energeia*, *Hypokeimenon*, *Hyparchein*, *Subiectum*, *Actualitas* (*creator—ens creatum, causa prima*), *Certitudo—res cogitans*, *Vis—monas*, Objectivity, Freedom, Will, Will to Power, Machination (Enframing).[121] This long list of fundamental words that determine being in the history of metaphysics can be grouped together into more or less coherent epochal constellations. First, there is a pre-Socratic understanding of being in which metaphysics has not yet solidified and taken on a completely hegemonic hold. Then, there is a classical Greek foundation found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, a foundation that becomes determinative for all future metaphysics. This is followed by a Latin translation of the Greek terms into the theological metaphysics of medieval scholasticism. With Descartes, modernity is reached and with it the metaphysics of subjectivity, which finds its consummation in Hegel's absolute knowing and the absolute idea. This consummation is then overturned by Nietzsche, but such an overturning of metaphysics is, for

Heidegger, still implicated in metaphysics. Nietzsche's overturning can be seen historically as the unconditional manipulation of all that is, and the present age is governed by technology, machination, and "Enframing" (*Gestell*). Heidegger's texts of the late thirties and early forties meticulously show how it is that each epochal constellation grows out of previous ones through a reinterpretation of the beingness of beings.

This detour into Heidegger's understanding of the history of being as metaphysics should alert us to a fundamental ambiguity and transformation in Heidegger's conception of "world" from the twenties to the thirties. World was arguably the fundamental concept of Heidegger's philosophy surrounding *Being and Time*, and as we have seen was intimately related to the concept of being and Dasein. The project of fundamental ontology, as a recovery of the ground of metaphysics, was seen by Heidegger as a positive project in which the very concept of world would become thematized and uncovered. However, the transformation we have outlined above regarding the history of metaphysics has important implications for Heidegger's thinking of "world" and for his earlier holism. If philosophy is still understood as an orientation toward the whole of what is, this orientation is seen in a different light once it is implicated in the totalizing tendency of metaphysics to determine, in each successive epoch, the totality of what is. While Heidegger may have begun his career by aligning himself with the holistic aspirations of philosophy found in Plato and Aristotle, we now see him distancing himself from this conception and seeking to overcome philosophy understood as metaphysics. As we will see in the following section, this overcoming is intertwined in important ways with a rethinking of the concept of nature.

NATURE, EARTH, AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF BEING

Heidegger's transition from the project of a metaphysics of Dasein toward a thinking that is no longer gripped by metaphysics, but rather a thinking of the history of Being, involves a fundamental reinterpretation of the concept of nature. As I argued above, the concept of nature presents significant problems for Heidegger's project of a phenomenological ontology, problems pertaining to the way in which nature may not be easily and comfortably circumscribed within the domain of the world as a space for meaning and intelligibility. In this section I hope to show that it is through a radical rethinking of the concept of nature itself, and of the way nature has functioned in the history of being as metaphysics, that such a transformation takes place in Heidegger's thinking. This transformation may be said to most explicitly take place within his 1935 lecture course, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, a lecture course that finds Heidegger already beyond the project of a fundamental ontology, and

beginning to think about the history of being as metaphysics. It is therefore an important text in tracing what is usually called Heidegger' turn, or *Kehre*. Early in the lecture course Heidegger begins by attributing to "the Greeks" the surprising claim that: "In the age of the first and definitive unfolding of Western philosophy among the Greeks, when questioning about beings as such and as a whole [*dem Seienden als solchem im Ganzen*] received its true inception, beings were called *phusis*."[122] It is initially difficult to know what exactly Heidegger means by "the Greeks," since as he knows all too well, in Plato and Aristotle *phusis* already came to mean something like a regional ontology—a particular sphere of what exists, but not a word that straightforwardly designated beings as such and as a whole. Throughout the development of the lecture course, it becomes clear that Heidegger means something like the period between Homer on the one hand, and Plato and Aristotle on the other, therefore denoting by "the Greeks" the entirety of classical Greek culture in its pre-Socratic manifestations, before the philosophical revolution enacted by Platonic and Aristotelian rationalism.

Phusis is therefore the Greek word for being itself in the inception, the word through which they understood and determined what it means to be. This does not mean that through an investigation of nature and natural beings the Greeks developed their ontology, but rather that an ontology of *phusis* was a kind of historical a priori through which they understood all that emerges into existence: "*Phusis* is Being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable. It was not in natural processes that the Greeks first experienced what *phusis* is, but the other way around: on the basis of a fundamental experience of Being in poetry and thought, what they had to call *phusis* disclosed itself to them."[123] *Phusis* was for them a mode of disclosure, a designation of the way in which entities enter into the truth of their being. In line with the Greek verb *phuein*, which means to grow, to bring forth, and to beget, Heidegger translates the word for being of the Greeks as "what emerges from itself [*von sich aus Aufgehende*]"[124] and "emerging, abiding sway [*das aufgehend-verweilende Walten*]"[125] to designate a coming forth into presence out of concealment. The tendency of this thinking of being is to simultaneously understand it as a domain of truth, as an emergence from concealment to unconcealment, but to privilege that which becomes present over and against the concealment against which it presences: "But this sway first steps forth from concealment—that is, in Greek, *alētheia* (unconcealment) happens—insofar as the sway struggles itself forth as a world. Through world, beings first come into being."[126] Concealment belongs essentially to the relationship of emergence, and Heidegger designates this relationship of what shows up in the world to that which does not show up as a "struggle." The aspect of concealment that was fundamental to truth in the 1930 essay "On the Essence of Truth" is here designated as an inherent concealment in

being itself, in *phusis* itself: "concealment and the provenance from concealment essentially belong to Being. . . . Being remains inclined toward concealment."[127] Heidegger is here explicitly thinking of Heraclitus' "*phusis kruptesthai philei*"[128] as a way in which being conceals itself prior to the reinterpretation it undergoes in Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics.

The understanding of *phusis* as a word for being is still preserved today, to some extent, in the double sense in which we use "nature." That is, we may use "nature" to designate a particular domain of the beingness of entities—ones that are natural as opposed, say, to the artificial or to the historical, but we still use "nature" in the sense of the "nature of a thing" to designate its essence, its "whatness" or what it means for it to be what it is. According to Heidegger, within Platonic metaphysics, this sense of the "whatness" or "nature" of a thing undergoes a radical transformation and reinterpretation under the concept of *eidos* or *idea*: "At the end, the word *idea*, *eidos*, 'idea,' comes to the fore as the definitive and prevailing word of Being (*phusis*). Since then, the interpretation of Being as idea rules over all Western thinking throughout the history of its changes up to today."[129] This is a very consequential claim—the revolution initiated by Plato in the transformation of being from *phusis* to *idea* has held us captive within metaphysics for over two millennia. What is decisive for this transformation? Being comes to mean primarily the "look" or "shape" of something that presents itself to us. The aspect of that which is lit up, brought to light, or made manifest takes precedence over the more transitive understanding of the entire activity of emergence. Because of this precedence and emphasis, Being is no longer understood as a verbal and transitive relation of coming out of hiding, but primarily as that which comes to presence from that activity or relationship: "it is the available coming to presence of what comes to presence: *ousia*."[130] We therefore find that being and *phusis* come to have a restrictive sense, and begin to lose the aspect of concealment and hiding that was essential to its "essential sway." Heidegger is not here disparaging or simply criticizing the Platonic understanding as a misinterpretation, in fact, he claims that the interpretation of being from emergence (*phusis*) to "emergent shining [*Scheinen*]" and therefore to that which shows itself in its shape and form "results from the fundamental experience of Being as *phusis*."[131] But this result (Being as *idea* or *eidos*) now takes the place of the entire relationship of emergence, and by replacing the essence of what it means to be, it covers over something that later becomes unavailable to the tradition, or at least sedimented, to use Husserl's geological metaphor: "But if that which is an essential consequence is raised to the level of essence itself, and thus takes the place of the essence, then how do things stand? . . . What remains decisive is not the fact in itself that *phusis* was characterized as idea, but that the idea rises up as the sole and

definitive [*einzige und maßgebende*] interpretation of Being."[132] The ground is replaced with the consequent, or the essential consequence takes the place of the entire transitive essence. We come to see the foreground of being, that which comes into presence and abides in presence, but lose sight of the background out of which it arose and the process by which it came to presence. We therefore find a historical unearthing of the way in which being comes to be thought within metaphysics as intelligibility.

Heidegger returns to this account of a forgetting of an original sense of *phusis* in his 1939 essay "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's Physics B, I," but now with his account of the history of being as metaphysics fully in place. With the decisive metaphysical transformation of the Greeks, Heidegger writes, *phusis* and its later translations as *natura* and *Natur* "become the fundamental word [*Grundwort*] that designates essential relations that Western historical humanity has to beings, both to itself and to beings other than itself."[133] He shows how nature becomes the basis of several important dichotomies in the history of metaphysics, including "nature and grace," "nature and art" (*phusis* and *technē*), "nature and history," and "nature and spirit."[134] Within each of these dichotomous configurations, the term nature maintains a certain predominance and priority, rather than simply designating a regional ontology: "in each case the word contains an interpretation of beings as a whole, even when 'nature' seems to be meant as only one term in a dichotomy."[135] In the essay, Heidegger goes to great pains to show both how the original sense of *phusis* still holds in a concealed way in Aristotle's *Physics*, while simultaneously showing how a reinterpretation that prioritizes *presence* and *ousia* is offered by Aristotle's thinking. On Heidegger's interpretation, *phusis* is shown to be "the presencing of the absencing of itself, one that is on-the-way from itself and unto itself. As such an absencing, *phusis* remains a going-back-into-itself, but this going-back is only the going of a going-forth."[136] By combining the accounts given in *Introduction to Metaphysics* and in this later text, we are led to the conclusion that a fundamental transformation in the concept of *phusis*, and thus of being itself, has occurred in the metaphysical positions offered by Plato and by Aristotle, and that this transformation has taken a hold of the entire tradition of metaphysics, up to Hegel and Nietzsche.

What the tradition of metaphysics hides, according to Heidegger, is the very hiding of *phusis* itself. The task at the end of metaphysics becomes one of not fully identifying being with world, that is, the beingness of beings with the manifestness of beings as such and as a whole, but rather, "the task is the much more difficult one of allowing to *phusis*, in all the purity of its essence, the *kruptesthai* that belongs to it."[137] This task leads Heidegger in the late thirties to present a counter-concept, of sorts, to his notion of world, one that

incorporates this self-veiling and self-hiding aspect of nature understood in its original Greek sense at the inception of metaphysics. He does this most notably in "The Origin of the Work of Art" by introducing the concept of earth (*Erde*), a concept that is new in relationship to the project of fundamental ontology of *Being and Time* and the following lecture courses in which the metaphysics of Dasein is worked out. Earth now becomes Heidegger's inheritor concept of the Greek *phusis*, but one that speaks directly of the self-veiling aspects of Being: "The Greeks early called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *physis*. It illuminates also that on which and in which man bases his dwelling. We call this ground the earth. . . . In the things that arise, earth occurs essentially as the sheltering agent [*das Bergende*]."[138] Through an interpretation of a temple as a work of art that sets up a world in which we can be at home, Heidegger makes it clear that the truth of being must no longer be thought primarily through the concept of world, but through a conjunction of the two counter-concepts earth and world: "In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth."[139] By calling these two "counter-concepts," one must not understand them as dichotomies, contradictions, or oppositional concepts. Rather, together they form what a work of art may disclose, but in a tension such that only one aspect of the disclosure comes to light, while the other remains hidden: "The earth appears openly cleared as itself only when it is perceived and preserved as that which is essentially undisclosable [*wesenhaft Unerschließbare*], that which shrinks from every disclosure and constantly keeps itself closed up."[140] The earth is a counter-concept to world as that which withdraws from manifestness and tends toward a preservation and self-veiling of itself. Moreover, this withdrawal is so essential that earth must be deemed inherently undisclosable or inexplicable.

Clearly once again following upon the footsteps of Heraclitus, Heidegger understands the relationship between earth and world, and thus of nature and world, as one of strife: "The world, in resting upon the earth, strives to surmount it. As self-opening it cannot endure anything closed. The earth, however, as sheltering and concealing, tends always to draw the world into itself and keep it there. The opposition of world and earth is strife."[141] Unlike the general tendency of metaphysics, which is toward the disclosedness of what is in the world, the work of art in its truest vocation is, for Heidegger, capable of preserving both aspects of the relationship of truth. In the work of art one finds a happening of truth that is somehow broader and deeper than the restricted sense of truth found within the tendencies toward knowledge and presence within metaphysics: "The work-being of the work consists in the instigation of strife between world and earth."[142] The work thereby sets into motion a kind of clearing that is different from the clearing found in metaphysics. While the latter forecloses and veils the very veiling of truth, the work of art clears in a manner that preserves the veiling aspects of truth

in its strife with and against world: "*This denial, in the form of a double concealment, belongs to the essence of truth as unconcealment.* Truth, in its essence, is un-truth."[143] Truth is, for Heidegger, a strange relationship in that on the one hand it maintains an essential relationship to concealment, on the other hand, in its tendency toward manifestness, it tends to deny an essential role to such concealment. This is the double denial he speaks of, and it is one that becomes manifest in the work of art, but foreclosed in the metaphysical determination of truth as the light of the intelligible—as restricted by its interpretation as *eidos*.

We can therefore isolate three different paths or changes within Heidegger's thinking in the thirties which come together with full resonance in his famous 1953 article, "The Question Concerning Technology." The first is the transition from a positive conception of a metaphysics of Dasein that, while more deeply grounding metaphysics, is still implicated in metaphysical and ontological thinking, toward a more critical step back from metaphysics and toward a thinking of the history of being as metaphysics. The second is the deepening understanding of nature, one that marked a limit to intelligibility in the early phenomenological work, toward a conception of nature as earth in fundamental strife to the openness of world. The third is a deepening appreciation for the veiling or concealing aspect of truth, now understood as fundamentally tied to the question of nature as earth and to the metaphysical transformation in the concept of *phusis* in the first inception of Western thinking in Plato and Aristotle. These three transitions in Heidegger's thought are obviously related to one another, and only by thinking through all of them simultaneously can one begin to understand Heidegger's account of technology as mastery of nature. His understanding of technology should not be understood as merely a critique of an empirical aspect of the modern relationship to nature, but as fundamentally tied to the reinterpretation of nature in modernity, a reinterpretation that finds its basis and ground upon the metaphysical transformation that began with the Greeks. Already in 1939, Heidegger argued that it is through the various interpretations of nature that we arrive at our modern technological manipulation of all that is. Nietzsche's re-naturalization project, which involves an unleashing of our drives and passions as well as a reappreciation of the elemental powers of nature, prepares for the technological understanding of being: "In virtue of this new relation these people bring 'the elemental' into their power and by this power make themselves capable of the mastery of the world in the sense of systematic world-domination [Weltherrschaft]."[144] How exactly does this come about?

We have seen that at the inception of metaphysics, *phusis* takes on a restricted sense from initially meaning the entire transitive activity of emergence out of hiding into that which is made present and manifest. *Phusis* thus

becomes repeatedly reinterpreted throughout the history of metaphysics in a series of dichotomies, beginning with *phusis* and *technē* and leading up to its consummation in Hegel, in nature and spirit (*Natur und Geist*). But as we have seen, Hegel enacts a kind of final forgetting of the aspect of self-veiling, insofar as he thinks truth as the negative self-relation of the idea, which is ultimately grounded in a modern understanding of subjectivity. The modern metaphysics of subjectivity becomes, through a series of transformations, the metaphysics of the will-to-power: "Modern metaphysics, as the metaphysics of subjectness, thinks the Being of that which is in the sense of will."[145] For Heidegger, therefore, despite the fact that both Hegel and Nietzsche see themselves as in important senses critics of Descartes's philosophical project, they are actually essentially aligned to Descartes's project of making ourselves masters of nature. Descartes's fundamental metaphysical reinterpretation stands at the inception of modernity: "Everything that is, is therefore either the object of the subject or the subject of the subject."[146] This is a fundamental recasting of the Greek *phusis* as a name for being, in which the human replaces the role for grounding what is and turns the world into the object standing against [*Gegen-stand*] a subject: "The world [*Welt*] changes into object [*Gegenstand*]. In this revolutionary objectifying of everything that is, the earth, that which first of all must be put at the disposal of representing and setting forth, moves into the midst of human positing and analyzing."[147] In this new relationship, nature loses completely its role as an authority for thinking—rather, the subject is the sole authority and ground upon which nature can be what it is. Here Heidegger uses the terms earth and nature interchangeably, in order to show the transformation of the self-veiling aspect of Being into something that is the mere plaything for the manipulation of the human: "The earth itself can show itself only as the object of assault, an assault that, in human willing, establishes itself as unconditional objectification. Nature appears everywhere—because willed from out of the essence of Being—as the object of technology."[148] With this final step in the history of metaphysics, the forgetfulness of Being reaches its zenith, and beings disclose themselves as mere "stuff" at our disposal to be manipulated by our will.

Heidegger's rethinking of the history of metaphysics and the transformations in the concept of nature reach a condensed articulation and culimation in his thinking of technology. Technology is for him not a neutral human activity, one that can be used for good or for ill, but the fundamental relationship to nature that governs our contemporary relationship to everything that exists. Technology must be thought in relationship to the metaphysical determination of the truth of Being, and that means that technology determines our new relationship to truth: "Technology is a mode of revealing. Technology comes to presence in the realm where revealing and unconcealment takes place, where *alētheia*, truth, happens."[149] Technology reveals entities as

"standing reserve [*Bestand*],"[150] and that means that it is a kind of "challenging [*Herausfordern*]"[151] of nature. The elemental in nature becomes standing reserve in that it can now be simply used for power, whether such power is hydroelectric power to be extracted from rivers and damns, oil and gas to be extracted from the earth, or nuclear power to be unleashed from the atomic structure of matter and harnessed for human consumption. Heidegger's examples show that such a relationship to nature is not reserved for the elemental energies of nature, but infiltrate the entire way in which we economically relate to the world, from the transformation of our natural environment into the "vacation industry"[152] to the way we order humans as "human resources [*Menschenmaterial*]."[153] Humans themselves are not in control of such a challenging forth of nature, but are thoroughly implicated in such a relationship. He calls this gathering relationship between man and technology by the term *Ge-stell*, often translated as En-framing or positionality: "We now name the challenging claim that gathers man with a view to ordering the self-revealing as standing-reserve: *Ge-stell* [enframing]."[154] In Enframing, the totality of what is becomes revealed as something to be ordered, distributed, stored, unlocked, transformed, and used up by humans at will.

Technology maintains an essential bond with modern physical science, but not in the usual way that the relationship is presented. Heidegger does not understand modern physics as the primary mode of revealing what is, and technology as application of such an understanding. For Heidegger, technology is not applied natural science or applied physics, but the customary way of seeing things needs to actually be reversed. While modern physics is historically the ground upon which technology comes to be, it is in technology that the "essence" of modern physics is truly revealed: "Modern science's way of representing pursues and entraps nature as a calculable coherence of forces. Modern physics is not experimental physics because it applies apparatus to the questioning of nature. The reverse is true."[155] In modern physics we may find the possibility of control not only of nature, but the hope of a control over the very technological ways of ordering nature. But for Heidegger such a dream of control is an illusion, since it once again the reverse is true—it is we who are controlled by the essence of technology. Descartes's dream of securing ourselves as lords of nature by means of a methodically controlled science hides a deeper dependency: "Man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself and postures as lord of the earth. In this way the illusion comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct."[156] Insofar as technology is the mode of revealing of everything that is, and we are gathered into this relationship through *Gestell*, the very illusion of control of nature is part of our contemporary relationship to nature. The resources for ecological thinking here are obvious, and have

been fruitfully taken up by commentators.[157] Insofar as the culmination of the history of Being as metaphysics resolves itself into the devastation of the earth and the illusory project of world-domination, a great deal is at stake in a kind of thinking that takes a step back from metaphysics and imagines a new beginning for thought: "The question concerning our basic comportment toward nature, our knowledge of nature as such, and our lordship over nature, is not a question of natural science—but this question is itself in question in *the* question concerning whether and how we are still addressed by beings as such and as a whole."[158]

We have hereby reached the conclusion of Heidegger's radical rethinking of metaphysics and of nature. Being as *phusis* in the original Greek sense has led, through a series of fateful decisions on the part of metaphysics, to a hubristic self-satisfaction on the part of humanity in which the earth is finally rendered completely without any authority for thinking or for acting, but merely as resource to be manipulated and used by the human will. By way of a conclusion, I'd like now to highlight two important repercussions that this rethinking of nature and metaphysics has for Heidegger's conception of world and for philosophy's aspirations toward a knowing orientation toward the world as a whole. The first repercussion involves an expansion of the space of meaning to something that is broader and deeper than any metaphysical notion of world. This broadening and deepening calls for the inclusion of the withdrawal operative within his concept of nature, earth, and his rethinking of truth into any understanding of the realm of meaning which humans can inhabit. If in the early work surrounding *Being and Time* Heidegger seems to identify being, the space of meaningfulness, and the world, through the renewed understanding of nature in the 1930s and 1940s he comes to replace the world as the space of meaningfulness with the clearing (*Lichtung*): "And yet—beyond beings, not away from them but before them, there is still something else that happens. In the midst of beings as a whole an open place occurs. There is a clearing [*Eine Lichtung ist*]."[159] While the clearing is the space in which truth as unconcealment happens, it no longer has the primary meaning of manifestness and disclosedness. It now *includes* the sheltering, veiling, and concealing aspects: "The clearing happens only as this double concealment."[160] Being as a happening of the truth of being is no longer the world, since world can no longer be straightforwardly equated to the clearing in which meaningfulness happens: "But the world is not simply the open region that corresponds to clearing."[161]

The clearing now becomes the primary name for the happening of meaningfulness, and if we are to think beyond metaphysics, we must maintain some relationship to that which withdraws in the granting of such openness. Being is no longer simply that which is present, but simultaneously that which absences itself from all presencing: "The clearing is the open region

for everything that becomes present and absent."[162] Spoken metaphysically, one may say that the clearing is the very condition of possibility for any manifestness at all, that it lies deeper than any disclosure and meaning, but in a such a manner that, contrary to metaphysics, it does not simply present a new ground or condition of possibility: "The clearing grants first of all the possibility of the path to presence, and grants the possible presencing of that presence itself."[163] In order to remain attentive to such a thought, Heidegger suggests that we take on a more receptive comportment toward that which conceals itself in the happening of meaning. If modernity and the metaphysics of subjectivity are indissolubly tied to the synthetic activity and productivity of the subject, to its active determining of all that is, a thinking beyond metaphysics must maintain a more receptive (though not passive) relationship that allows what has been concealed to resurface once again. Heidegger calls for a new comportment in thinking, which he designates by a twofold relationship. First, following Meister Eckhart's mystical thought,[164] Heidegger calls for a "releasement towards things [*die Gelassenheit zu den Dingen*],"[165] a comportment that lets them be what they are rather than pre-determining their beingness in a metaphysical grounding. Second, in relation to that which withdraws in the space of meaning, he calls for an "openness to the mystery [*die Offenheit für das Geheimnis*]."[166] These two comportments together form the basic structure of a meditative form of thinking that eschews the calculative and instrumental thinking of modernity. Tentatively, they prepare us for a new comportment toward being that is radically different from the contemporary domination of *Ge-stell*: "Releasement toward things and openness to the mystery belong together. They grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way [*eine ganz andere Weise in der Welt aufzuhalten*]."[167]

The second significant repercussion of Heidegger's rethinking of metaphysics and inclusion of the veiling aspects of nature is a significant abandonment of the holistic aspirations of philosophy. Whereas in his early work Heidegger aligned his thinking with the project of philosophy as a knowing orientation toward the whole of beings and therefore toward the world, now he wants to take a step back from that very project into a new and deeper domain of experience. The rethinking of the history of metaphysics which was outlined earlier in this chapter, together with the attention to the withdrawal of being in the reconceptualization of the concept of nature, have led to this abandonment of philosophy. The identification of philosophy with metaphysics, of metaphysics with the thinking of being as a whole, together with the critique of that very project of grounding, leaves Heidegger to a radical shift away from both projects: "Philosophy is metaphysics. Metaphysics thinks beings as a whole."[168] Philosophy is now completely identified with and implicated in the project of metaphysics to determine the entirety of what

is by means of metaphysical principles and grounds. This project, and thereby philosophy itself, according to Heidegger, has in certain respects exhausted itself. Reaching its culmination as possibility in Hegel and its overturning in Nietzsche, philosophy is actually at an end: "The end of philosophy is the place, that place in which the whole of philosophy's history is gathered in its uttermost possibility."[169] Heidegger thereafter prefers the name "thinking" to "philosophy" for the appropriate term by which to designate the kind of relationship to Being that is still available in late modernity. Insofar as it no longer thinks the question of the meaning of beings as such and as a whole, thinking may be said to be less than philosophy: "the thinking in question here necessarily falls short of the greatness of the philosophers."[170] It is also less than philosophy insofar as it no longer seeks to think being as a new ground that would continue the history of metaphysics. It is a thinking that prepares the way to a new relationship, released from the burdens of grounding and founding, or "its task is only of a preparatory, not of a founding character."[171] But its task has, in another respect, already been set by the history of metaphysics: to open up a new relationship to that which essentially withdraws in each metaphysical configuration. The task of thinking is to find a way to recover a relationship to that which withdraws and conceals itself in each metaphysical grounding, but in a manner that does not once again appropriate such a withdrawal into the light of intelligibility. We are called by thought to let something be that has not been allowed to show itself for over two thousand years, except by virtue of the many ways in which it has been covered over.

NOTES

1. Heidegger, BT, 19; SZ, 1.
2. Heidegger, BT, 123; SZ, 89. One influential account of this critique can be found in Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's* Being and Time*, Division I* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 108–27.
3. Heidegger, BT, 87; SZ, 60.
4. Heidegger, HCT, 219; PGZ, 301.
5. Heidegger, BT, 124; SZ, 132.
6. Heidegger, BT, 78; SZ, 53.
7. Heidegger, BT, 118; SZ, 85.
8. Heidegger, BT, 119; SZ, 86.
9. Heidegger, BT, 101; SZ, 71.
10. Heidegger, BT, 106–7; SZ, 75–76.
11. Heidegger, BT, 171; SZ, 132.
12. Heidegger, BT, 93; SZ, 64.
13. Heidegger, BT, 93; SZ, 64.

14. Heidegger, BT, 93; SZ, 65.
15. Heidegger, BT, 93; SZ, 65.
16. Heidegger, BT, 60; SZ, 35.
17. Heidegger, BT, 93–94; SZ, 65.
18. Heidegger, BT, 93; SZ, 65.
19. Heidegger, BT, 94; SZ, 65.
20. Heidegger himself noticed this, as is evident in his later marginal comments to *Being and Time* where he claims that what he primarily means in these passages is "'Nature' in the Kantian concept in the sense of modern physics *['Natur' hier Kantisch gemeint im Sinne der neuzeitlichen Physik*]," in note (b) to BT 61; SZ 65, in GA 2, 88.
21. Heidegger, BT, 100, SZ, 70.
22. Heidegger, BT, 100; SZ, 70.
23. Heidegger, BT, 245; SZ, 201
24. Heidegger, BT, 273; SZ, 230.
25. Heidegger, BT, 245; SZ, 201.
26. Heidegger, BT, 246; SZ, 202.
27. Heidegger, BT, 255, SZ, 212.
28. There is much debate about to what extent and in what way Heidegger may have been a transcendental idealist. Different versions that defend an idealist interpretation can be found in William Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Piotr Hoffman, "Heidegger and the Problem of Idealism," *Inquiry* 43, no. 4 (2000): 403–12; and Lee Braver, *A Thing of This World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007). An excellent collection of essays on this issue can be found in *Transcendental Heidegger*, edited by Steven Crowell and Jeff Malpas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007). The term "ontological idealism" is, of course, not used by Heidegger himself, but is Blattner's term to denote the dependence of being (not beings) on Dasein.
29. See Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in* Being and Time (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 155–203; David Cerbone, "World, World-Entry, and Realism in Early Heidegger," Inquiry 38 (1995): 401–21. Carman here responds to Blattner's idealist reading of Heidegger, proposing that it cannot fully accommodate Heidegger's "ontic realism," namely, the independence of entities from Dasein.
30. Heidegger, BT, 255; SZ, 212.
31. Heidegger, BT, 228; SZ, 183.
32. Heidegger, BT, 255; SZ, 212.
33. Herman Philipse, "Heidegger's 'Scandal of Philosophy,': The Problem of the 'Ding an Such' in 'Being and Time,'" in *Transcendental Heidegger*, edited by Steven Crowell and Jeff Malpas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 169–98.
34. Heidegger, BT, 249; SZ, 205.
35. Heidegger, BT, 100; SZ, 70.
36. Heidegger, BT, 100; SZ, 70.
37. Heidegger, BT, 254; SZ, 211.

38. This should not be too surprising, since it must be noted that nowhere does Heidegger insist that the categories of *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit* exhaust the domain of entities unlike Dasein. In the lecture courses surrounding *Being and Time*, the phenomenological descriptions of our encounter with entities are not subsumed under a twofold structure, but instead often imply a more fluid characterization based on levels of abstraction and multiple modes of encountering. For instance, in 1925, in describing different ways of approaching the "chairness" of the chair, Heidegger's description moves through three, and not two, different levels: initially the chair as environmental thing, then as "natural thing," and finally "by applying an appropriate form of research to it," as an abstract thing: "but now it is no longer in the perceived (chair) as environmental thing [*Umweltding*] or as natural thing [*Naturding*]. Now I am concerned with *thingness* as such [Dinglichkeit *als solcher*]." Heidegger, HCT, 39; PGZ, 51. The two categories of innerworldly beings thematized in *Being and Time* should not be read in a reified manner as if they exhausted all relations to the domain of entities.

39. Heidegger, BT 75; SZ 50.

40. Heidegger, BT, 94; SZ, 65.

41. Heidegger, BT, 193; SZ, 152.

42. Heidegger, HCT, 217–18; PGZ, 298.

43. Heidegger, HCT, 218; PGZ, 299.

44. Heidegger, PIK, 14; PIKK, 19. See also his earlier remark in the same passage: "This being may be extant within our world, it may belong to what we come across in the world and be an innerwoldly being; but it does not have to be that way."

45. Heidegger, BT 193; SZ 151.

46. Heidegger, BPP, 165; GP, 235.

47. Heidegger, BT, 193; SZ, 152.

48. Heidegger, BT, 81; SZ, 55.

49. Heidegger, BPP, 168; GP, 240. Translation slightly modified for *innerweltlich* and *Innerweltlichkeit* in all of the citations to this text.

50. Heidegger, BPP, 169; GP, 240.

51. Heidegger, BPP, 170; GP, 241.

52. Heidegger, BPP, 168; GP, 240.

53. Heidegger, FCM, 177; GM, 263.

54. Heidegger, FCM 196; GM, 290.

55. Heidegger, FCM 197; GM, 290.

56. Heidegger, FCM 274; GM, 397.

57. Heidegger, FCM 283; GM, 410.

58. Heidegger, FCM 284; GM, 412.

59. Heidegger, FCM, 196; GM, 289.

60. For an excellent summary of Heidegger's account of animality, see William McNeill, "Life Beyond the Organism: Animal Being in Heidegger's Freiburg Lectures, 1929–1930," in *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology and Animal Life*, edited by Peter Steeves (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999). For an almost exhaustive account of Heidegger's engagement with the contemporary biological theory of his day and its effects on his understanding of organic life, see Thomas Kessel, *Phänomenologie*

des Lebendigen: Heideggers Kritik an den Leitbegriffen der Neuzeitlichen Biologie (Verlag Karl Alber, 2011).

61. See, for example, Matthew Calarco, who concludes that despite all the caveats, Heidegger's "discourse on animals constantly falls back into an anthropocentric framework, measuring animals against what he considers to be uniquely human capacities." Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 36.

62. Heidegger, FCM, 198; GM, 291.

63. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, translated by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 143–60.

64. Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

65. Heidegger, FCM, 273; GM, 396.

66. Heidegger, EP, 123–26.

67. Andrew J. Mitchell, "Heidegger's Late Thinking of Animality: The End of World-Poverty," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 1 (2011): 84.

68. Hegel, SL, 134; WL, 145.

69. Hegel, SL, 134; WL, 145.

70. Heidegger, FCM, 270; GM, 392.

71. Heidegger, FCM, 359; GM, 522.

72. Heidegger, BT, 487; SZ, 436–37.

73. Heidegger, BT, 487; SZ, 436.

74. Heidegger, MFL, 154; MAL, 196.

75. Heidegger, MFL 157; MAL, 200. For an excellent account of the uncomfortable relationship between ontology, phenomenology, and metontology, see Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 222–43.

76. Heidegger, MFL, 156; MAL, 199.

77. Heidegger, MFL, 156; MAL, 199.

78. Heidegger, BT, 321; SZ, 276.

79. Heidegger, MFL 156–57; MAL, 199.

80. It may be worth mentioning that Heidegger had just taught a seminar on Schelling in 1927–1928, beginning his sustained engagement with Schelling's thought, and engagement which would deepen and continue throughout the thirties.

81. Heidegger, MFL 157; MAL, 199.

82. Heidegger, MFL 158; MAL, 202.

83. The argument I present here is therefore in direct agreement, albeit not on specifics, with the general strategy of Michael Lewis, *Heidegger Beyond Deconstruction: On Nature* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 10–36.

84. Heraclitus, fragment 123, in *The Presocratic Philosophers*, edited by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 192.

85. This question is closely related to how one ought to understand the path of Heidegger's thought and its various transformations. It has been customary to divide Heidegger's thinking into early and late, with a so-called turn (*Kehre*) in between the two periods. More nuanced periodizations can be given, with recourse to (I) an early

or young Heidegger, (II) a phenomenological period surrounding *Being and Time*, (III) a metaphysical interlude of the late twenties and early thirties, (IV) a thinking of the history of being as metaphysics in the thirties, leading to (V) a late or mature Heidegger of *Gelassenheit* and thinking. On Heidegger's paths in thinking and various reorientations, see especially Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, translated by Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1987), W. J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), and Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). The relative discontinuity between these periods is a matter of great controversy, and some have argued for a strong continuity between the early phenomenological Heidegger and his later thought, most notably Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

86. Heidegger, KPM, 163; KPdM, 232.

87. See the claim made by Thomas Sheehan, "Dasein" in *A Companion to Heidegger*, edited by Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 200: "'World' is what Heidegger means by 'being' (*das Sein*), and he uses many terms and metaphors for this meaning-constituting structure."

88. Heidegger, FCM 284; GM, 412.

89. Heidegger, FCM 9.

90. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" in BW, 106; "Was ist Metaphysik?" in WM, 118.

91. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" in BW, 109; "Was ist Metaphysik?" in WM, 121–22.

92. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground," in PM, 107–9; "Vom Wesen des Grundes," in WM, 137–40.

93. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground," in PM, 123; "Vom Wesen des Grundes," in WM, 158.

94. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 277; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 365.

95. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 277; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 365.

96. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 277; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 365.

97. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 278; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 366.

98. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 278; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 366.

99. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 278; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 367.

100. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 279; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 367.

101. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 289; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 380.

102. Heidegger, BT, 262–63; SZ, 219–20

103. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in PM, 148; "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," in WM, 193.

104. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in PM, 148; "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," in WM, 193–94.

105. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in PM, 148; "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," in WM, 194.

106. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 280; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 369.

107. Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in OBT, 57; "Die Zeit des Weltbildes," in HW, 75.

108. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 54; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 209.

109. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 55; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 210.

110. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 56; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 212.

111. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 278; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 366.

112. Heidegger, BT, 29; SZ, 9.

113. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 281; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 370.

114. Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'" in PM, 287; "Einleitung zu 'Was ist Metaphysik?'" in WM, 378.

115. For a clear account of this ontotheological constitution, see Iain Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11–16.

116. Heidegger, "The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics," in ID, 58; "Die onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik," in IuD, 65–66.

117. Heidegger, N, 193; NII, 225.

118. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

119. Heidegger, CP, 271; BzP, 387.

120. Heidegger, CP, 265; BzP, 379–80.

121. Heidegger, "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics," in EoP, 66; "Entwürfe zur Geschichte des Seins als Metaphysik," in NII, 429.

122. Heidegger, IM, 14; EM, 15.

123. Heidegger, IM, 15–16; EM, 17.

124. Heidegger, IM, 15; EM, 16.

125. Heidegger, IM, 15; EM, 16.

126. Heidegger, IM, 64; EM, 66.

127. Heidegger, IM, 121; EM, 122.

128. Heraclitus, fragment 123, in *The Presocratic Philosophers*, edited by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 192.

129. Heidegger, IM, 192; EM, 189.

130. Heidegger, IM, 193; EM, 190.

131. Heidegger, IM, 194; EM, 191.

132. Heidegger, IM, 194; EM, 191.

133. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 183; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 239.

134. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 183; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 239.

135. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 184; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 240.

136. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 228; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 299.

137. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 230; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 301.

138. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 168; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 28.

139. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 172; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 32.

140. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 172; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 33.

141. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 174; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 35.

142. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 175; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 36.

143. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 179; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 41.

144. Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I" in PM, 183; "Vom Wesen und Begriff der Phusis. Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in WM, 239–40.

145. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 88; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 243–44.

146. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 100; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 256.

147. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 100; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 256.

148. Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is Dead'" in QCT, 100; "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist Tot'" in HW, 256

149. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 319; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 14–15.

150. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 322; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 17.

151. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 320; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 15.

152. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 321; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 17.

153. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 323; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 18.

154. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 324; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 20.

155. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 326; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 22.

156. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 332; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 28. Heidegger, QCT 332;

157. Cf. Michael E. Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 91–149.

158. Heidegger, QCtT, 34; FD, 49.

159. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 178; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 39–40.

160. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 179; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 41.

161. Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in BW, 180; "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," in HW, 42.

162. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 442; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 81.

163. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 445; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 84.

164. On Heidegger's relationship to Eckhart see especially John D. Caputo, *The Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986) and Ian A. Moore, *Eckhart, Heidegger, and the Imperative of Releasement* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2019).

165. Heidegger, "Memorial Address, in DT, 54; "Gelassenheit," in RZ, 527.

166. Heidegger, "Memorial Address, in DT, 55; "Gelassenheit," in RZ, 528.

167. Heidegger, "Memorial Address, in DT, 55; "Gelassenheit," in RZ, 528.

168. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 432; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 69.

169. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 433; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 70–71.

170. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 436; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 74.

171. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 436; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 75.

Chapter 3

Hegel *or* Heidegger

NATURE AND MODERNITY: ORPHIC *OR* PROMETHEAN ATTITUDES

Nature remains a problem for modernity and modern philosophy—this indictment is so pervasive that it has become a commonplace truism. Twentieth-century thinkers as radically different as Theodor Adorno and Leo Strauss, who agree on so little else, agree that the modern relationship to nature remains a fundamental problem and a site for thinking through modernity's self-understanding. For Adorno, the Enlightenment's attempt to extricate itself from myth ends in a totalitarian relationship to nature, and "what human beings seek to learn from nature is how to use it to dominate wholly both it and human beings."[1] For Strauss, modern political thought allows the modern critique of teleology in nature to infiltrate the doctrine of natural right, and the "modern view is a consequence of the rejection of nature as the standard."[2] Despite the fact that Adorno is attempting to find a way to save the enlightenment from its own recursion to barbarism, and that Strauss is seeking to radically criticize modernity in favor of a recovery of classical rationalism, they can be seen to agree that the transformation we call "modernity" involves a radical reorientation of our relationship to nature. As we have seen in first historical interlude, this problem arose in part due to the pressures of modern natural science and the role that the mechanistic view of the universe and of humanity had in displacing the previous harmonious position of the human within the cosmos. The modern relationship to nature is a problem in that it can neither accommodate the authority of nature nor fully realize its own project of subduing nature to complete human mastery and control.

Commentators may disagree on who the culprit is for the modern domination of nature, but the usual suspects are generally agreed to be Machiavelli, Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes, with diverging levels of responsibility.[3] Some

may find the paradigmatic modern position toward nature in Machiavelli's reinterpretation of ancient virtue and his unsavory and sexist call for a subjugation of *fortuna*: "It is better to be impetuous than cautious, because fortune is a woman: and it is necessary, if one wants to hold her down, to beat her and strike her down."[4] Others find the true beginning of a modern relationship to nature in the attempt to extract the secrets of nature by means of the powers of scientific experimentation initiated by Bacon: "Human knowledge and human power come to the same thing, because ignorance of cause frustrates effect. For Nature is conquered only by obedience; and that which in thought is a cause, is like a rule in practice."[5] The most maligned culprit is usually Descartes, who imprudently and explicitly exclaimed what may have been implicit in the thought of the others before him, namely, that through modern knowledge we can make ourselves "the lords and masters of nature."[6] Perhaps the modern relationship to nature only comes into its own fully in Hobbes, who manages to unite the political implications of Machiavelli to the emerging mechanistic natural science that is in many ways an heir to the Baconian project.[7] Furthermore, Hobbes adds the dimension of the so-called "maker's knowledge" tradition, that is, the understanding that only what one has made or produced can be truly known and therefore is truly at one's disposal: "Geometry therefore is demonstrable, for the lines and figures from which we reason are drawn and described by ourselves; and civil philosophy is demonstrable, because we make the commonwealth ourselves."[8] While the question of who is deemed responsible for this shift in understanding is an interesting historical problem, there is little doubt that modernity broadly construed initiates a radically different relationship to nature.

In the first chapter I argued that one of the ways in which modern thinkers responded to this new relationship to nature was by instituting, in various ways and to various degrees, several important dichotomies that would allow the human world to coexist side by side with the natural realm. I have also noted that another modern possibility is offered by a thoroughgoing naturalization of the human realm, a possibility that can be found in both Spinoza's and Nietzsche's understandings of nature. While Spinoza remained a fundamental touchstone for Hegel, and Nietzsche a fundamental interlocutor for the late Heidegger, they both attempted to move beyond either of these projects of naturalization. Furthermore, as we have seen in chapters 1 and 2, neither Hegel nor Heidegger were satisfied with dualistic or dichotomous resolutions, and the holistic impetus of their philosophies required a deeper reconciliation between world and nature. In what follows, I will attempt to further characterize their relationships to the natural, and to show their distinctiveness in thinking through the modern relationship to nature. I shall do so by recourse to a helpful distinction between Promethean and orphic attitudes toward nature elaborated by Pierre Hadot in his book *The Veil of Isis*.[9]

In this erudite, subtle, and far-ranging book, Hadot investigates the historical reception and different attitudes that arise in relation to the notion of the "secrets" of nature, developed through the Heraclitean statement that "nature loves to hide" as well as the image of the veil of Isis. Hadot creates a typology through the figures of Prometheus and Orpheus, who come to name two different orientations one can have toward nature's tendencies to hide, veil itself, and resist human knowledge and power.

The Promethean attitude is the one we have articulated above as paradigmatically modern. But Hadot is historically sensitive here, showing that such an attitude is not exclusively modern, but could already be found early in the Hippocratic medical tradition. This attitude is characterized by him in the following manner: "If man feels nature to be an enemy, hostile and jealous, which resists him by hiding its secrets, there will then be opposition between nature and human art, based on human reason and will. Man will seek, through technology, to affirm his power, domination, and rights over nature."[10] Human reason, ingenuity, art, mechanics, and technique are therefore used in order to uncover, and at times *force* nature to uncover, its hidden secrets. While Hadot shows that this is a perennial possibility within the history of philosophy, both ancient and modern, there is little doubt that the modern revolution in the natural sciences and in experimentation have exacerbated and unleashed this tendency to proportions unseen in premodern times. Thus Prometheus is no longer a tragic figure in modernity as he had been in Aeschylus, but begins modernity ambiguously as justly punished but celebrated as a founder of experimental science by Bacon,[11] and ends by being described by Marx in his doctoral dissertation as "the most eminent saint and martyr in the philosophical calendar."[12] In opposition to the Promethean attitude Hadot describes the orphic attitude in the following manner: "The occultation of nature will be perceived not as a resistance that must be conquered but as a mystery into which human beings can be gradually initiated."[13] While the methods of the Promethean attitude are human ingenuity, cunning, boundless curiosity, and mechanical and artificial devices and tricks, the primary mode of disclosure for the orphic attitude is an aesthetic, musical, and poetic one: "Orpheus thus penetrates the secrets of nature not through violence but through melody, rhythm, and harmony."[14] Even the language of "penetrating" such a secret may be too Promethean a metaphor, since the orphic relationship involves a certain "respect in the face of mystery,"[15] and a certain care in the ways in which art may disclose without defiling.

It should be obvious by now that Hegel will stand as an heir to the Promethean attitude in his account of the negative self-relation spirit holds toward nature, and that Heidegger's *Gelassenheit* and openness toward the mystery falls squarely within what Hadot calls the orphic tradition. However, it would be a simplistic cliché to use this opposition in order to make Hegel

an uncompromising defender of modernity and the Enlightenment and Heidegger a wholehearted critic of modernity. Tempting as it may be, the relationship that Hegel and Heidegger hold toward the modern mastery of nature is not that simple. First of all, Hegel is also a critic of the abstract metaphysics of subjectivity, despite the fact that he praises it as a necessary step in the historical progression of thought. At times, while describing the modern spirit, he may appear to be endorsing such a position against the premodern ones in the history of philosophy. Take, as an example, this description of the modern revolution: "This period begins with Descartes. What is deemed valid or what has to be acknowledged is thinking freely on its own account, and this can happen only through my thinking freely within myself; only in this way can it be authenticated by me . . . Human beings must acknowledge and scrutinize in their own thoughts whatever is said to be normative, whatever in the world is said to be authoritative."[16] While Hegel is desiring to preserve aspects of this freedom of thought, it becomes clear in other passages that if taken abstractly, this very same freedom of thought can lead to the modern violence toward nature through a misapprehension of the relationship between the human and the natural. According to Hegel, therefore, domination of nature is itself a modern pathology, as he makes clear in his *Aesthetics*. Discussing "the modern intellect" that "produces this opposition in man" between a normative human world and a natural world without any authority or normative weight, he states:

> He lifts himself to eternal ideas, to a realm of thought and freedom, gives to himself, as *will*, universal laws and prescriptions, strips the world of its enlivened and flowering reality and dissolves it into abstractions, since the spirit now upholds its right and dignity only by mishandling nature and denying its right, and so retaliates on nature the distress and violence which it has suffered from it itself.[17]

In other words, for Hegel, the modern pathological relationship toward nature is the outcome of a particularly modern dichotomy that places all normative weight within the human spiritual world, against which stands a nature that has been denied any "right" and stripped of all its authority and determination. The healing of modernity can only arise by a reconciliation of the source of such a contradiction; we are not to treat the symptom, but the cause of the disease: "But for modern culture and its intellect this discordance in life and consciousness involves the demand that such a contradiction be resolved."[18]

Heidegger's own relationship to modernity remains analogously ambiguous. It is clear that for him, as for Hegel, the pathologies of the modern domination of nature as technology have developed out of the metaphysics of subjectivity, which exacerbate certain tendencies already present in Greek

rationalism and in the history of metaphysics as a whole. His valorization and recollective recovery of the ways in which Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides and the poets were able to relate to *phusis* in a manner that was not yet in complete grips of metaphysics may mistakenly suggest that he is advocating a simple return to those premodern attitudes and comportments toward nature. While he does want to overcome metaphysics and the modern metaphysics of subjectivity and *Gestell*, he does not advocate a return to pre-metaphysical times in a straightforwardly romantic manner. While the pastoral themes in Heidegger, his valorization of poetizing against philosophizing, and the way he draws on the works of Hölderlin, Novalis, Schelling, and other romantics may suggest the contrary, the thrust of his thought runs counter to any simplistic romantic return to origins. Of course, it remains tempting to read the frequent pastoral themes in Heidegger, and the renewed relationship to the earth it implies, in a romantic register, especially when reading comments such as the following: "Shepherds live invisibly and outside of the desert of the desolated earth. . . . It is one thing just to use the earth, another to receive the blessing of the earth and to become at home in the law of this reception in order to shepherd the mystery of Being and watch over the inviolability of the possible."[19] Despite the constant presence of similar statements through the late Heidegger, the main direction of his thinking is not one for nostalgic returns. This is because only in late modernity do the possibilities of overcoming metaphysics truly come to the fore, or as he liked to put it paraphrasing Hölderlin: "The closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become."[20] In other words, Heidegger should be seen as agreeing with Hegel that only by moving *through* modernity can one overcome modernity and metaphysics.

Despite the fact that neither Hegel nor Heidegger can be easily framed as simply unqualified defenders or critics of modernity, and it would be just as simplistic to paint Hegel as an unqualified defender of the modern Enlightenment project and Heidegger as its consummate critic, there are important ways in which they may be thought of as remaining respectively within the Promethean and orphic attitudes toward the natural. In what follows, I will attempt to outline in what way this is so. Hegel's Prometheanism can be usefully developed through three different stages of his philosophy's relationship to nature. The first phase is the one of a subjective and external teleology, in which nature is largely understood as a *means* for the development of spirit. In this stage, the Promethean attitude is at its most explicit and violent, and it can appear to be fully implicated in the modern mastery and violence toward nature. But this is not Hegel's final or considered position, as can be seen in the second mode of his Promethean attitude: the immanent teleology found within the concept of life as negative self-relation. Finally,

his Prometheanism is somewhat tempered by the third and final stage of absolute spirit, in the presentation of our self-understanding through art, religion, and philosophy, where Hegel claims we can fully overcome the violent and appropriative relationship with and dependence upon our natural conditions. Hegel thereby creates a tiered or developmental Prometheanism that, while never fully giving up the Promethean attitude, strives to purify it of the violent tendencies that Heidegger claims have been determinative and essential to modernity.

The first stage of our relationship to nature can be gleaned by means of what Hegel in the *Science of Logic* calls "*external purposiveness*."[21] Here the subjective end and the means of realization are external to one another, and Hegel helpfully uses technological examples such as plows, houses, clocks, and other tools in order to paradigmatically express this relationship. Following Aristotle, for whom *phusis* and *techne* are differentiated insofar as the former has its principle of motion *internal* to its entities, while the latter involve an *external* imposition of form and ends, in this relationship we find a means that has its end exogenously imposed upon it: "The end, because it is finite, requires a means for its realization—a means, that is a middle term, that at the same time has the shape of an *external* existence indifferent to the end itself and its realization."[22] Here the purposive relationship is a syllogism that requires a subjective end as the first term (as it were, the form), a means by which it is realized (the matter), in order to produce a result (the end). Hegel characterizes the means as the object or matter that is capable of receiving the form, describing it as "absolutely penetrable, and receptive of this communication"[23] and as "powerless against the end."[24] This relationship is clearly one of violent imposition—the broccoli becomes a means for the subsistence of the individual and the shape of the plow must be violently forced upon the wood from which it is made. However violent this relationship may be, Hegel argues that something fundamentally changes as the use of tools introduces a new mediating relationship between the end and the objectivity that is its means of attainment:

> That the end relates itself immediately to an object and makes it a means, as also that through this means it determines another object, may be regarded as *violence* [*Gewalt*] in so far as the end appears to be of a quite another nature than the object, and the two objects similarly are mutually independent totalities. But that the end posits itself in a mediate relation with the object and interposes another object between itself and it, may be regarded as the *cunning* of reason.[25]

If the purpose here is subsistence, the introduction of the plow between the subjective end and the attainment of consumptive satisfaction involves a relationship of violence of a completely different sort. The tool mediates

between the subject and nature, and in that mediation, the subject is to some extent shielded from its dependency on the object: "It puts forward an object as means, allows it to wear itself out in its stead, exposes it to attrition and shields itself behind it from mechanical violence."[26] Through the plow and the tool the subjective end is realized as a "power over external nature,"[27] but does so by mitigating the violence that the subject herself undergoes and mediating her unfreedom and dependence on nature.

Despite this initial mitigation, the entire relationship of external purposiveness must be understood as implicated in an economy of violence. The subject is defending itself from a certain kind of violence suffered at the hands of its dependence upon nature, and does so by means of the violent imposition of form upon matter in order to gain some power over nature. The instrumental means-ends relationship one finds in external purposiveness is therefore entirely Promethean, implicated in the destruction and mastery over nature that characterizes modernity: "Whatever is intended to be used for realizing an end and to be taken essentially as means, is a means which, in accordance with its destiny, is to be destroyed."[28] If this were Hegel's final word on our relationship to nature, that we turn it into a means and, through craft, technique, and tools, make it subservient to our own subjective purposes, then he would clearly be implicated in the mastery of *phusis* by means of *technai*. But this instrumental and external purposiveness is quickly supplanted by a higher and more immanent form of purposiveness, which we have already developed in chapter one through the category of Life. In the living organism and in the life-process, the means is no longer external to the end, but immanent to it: "Since the Concept is immanent in it, the *purposiveness* of the living being is to be grasped as *inner*."[29] There is no need here to once again rehearse the argument for life as a kind of negative self-relation that immanently surmounts itself through impulse, feeling, pain, and procreation. But we must characterize briefly how this inner purposiveness may change the character of the violence that was found in external purposiveness. As a negative self-relation, the mode of violence is transformed once it is no longer externally imposed, but a kind of self-imposition on the part of the organism upon herself: "It is the urge of each single, specific moment to produce itself, and equally to raise its particularity to universality, sublate the other moments external to it and produce itself at their very expense, but no less to sublate itself and make itself a means for the others."[30] In this passage Hegel is already presaging the production of the universal genus in the reproductive act of individual living beings, but the fact that the sublation is a *self*-sublation, a negative *self*-relation, involves an important broader claim about the living being and the life process.

Here the language of violence (*Gewalt*) largely disappears, as the internal negative self-relation of the life process can be seen, so to speak, as itself

natural. It is not that the relationship bears no resemblance to violence, but rather that since the purpose is not externally imposed, it no longer counts as violent in the same manner. There is still some form of instrumentality at work in a living being—the lung uses up oxygen, the organ uses up blood, the individual consumes food, even kills it in order to do so—but does so in a way that can be seen as internal to the life process. There is still opposition to the natural elements, to the environment and to food, and there is an urge to remain at home with oneself by consuming and appropriating, but no longer the same description of the relationship in terms of external violence: "The animal is, therefore, forced out of its simple self-relation into opposition to external Nature. . . . Thus by the annihilation of the Other confronting the animal, the original, simple self-relation and the contradiction contained in it is posited afresh."[31] The big fish eat the little fish, the organs of the body impose self-organizing principles upon its parts and matters, the beaver builds a dam—these are manifestations of the life-process itself in different stages and different degrees of self-determination. Hegel's attitude may still be said to be Promethean here, insofar as natural conditions are portrayed as in opposition to the purposes of an organism, an opposition that must be overcome by means of appropriation. But Hegel's insight (or trick, if one is not sympathetic to his portrayal), is to suggest that this Promethean attitude toward nature is already *nature's attitude toward itself*. Nature opposes itself to itself, overcomes itself, and attempts to liberate itself from itself in all of its life processes.

But life is merely the *immediate* idea, and in spirit the negative self-relation that is life reaches a different relationship to nature. We saw in chapter one how *finite* spirit still maintains a negative relationship to nature. This relationship is not entirely different in kind from external teleology, since nature is a material condition upon which and from which spirit attempts to gain its freedom. In other words, finite spirit is not fully at home in a world it has produced, since nature still confronts it as something alien and recalcitrant to its own ends. This means that, in Hegel's language, finite spirit remains within the domain of reflection: "As spirit is free, its manifestation is to *set forth* Nature as its world; but because it is reflection, it, in thus setting forth its world, at the same time presupposes the world as nature independently existing."[32] Finite spirit is only a first stage of the movement of spirit, and therefore remains entangled in a violent and Promethean relationship to nature. The stages of finite spirit's liberation from nature are "finding a world presupposed before us, generating a world as our own creation, and gaining freedom from it and in it."[33] However, an important transformation happens in the movement from finite spirit to Absolute spirit, which we will investigate in what follows only insofar as it pertains to the Promethean relationship to nature. As is well known, the domain of "absolute spirit" is for Hegel

composed of three different modes, modes that correspond to the three classical concepts of the beautiful, the good, and the true. They are respectively art, or the manifestation of the absolute in a sensuous and intuitive mode, religion, or the manifestation of the absolute through representation and picture-thinking, and philosophy, in which the same content is raised to the level of pure thinking.

In what follows I will focus on the domain of art, as the goal here is to depict the transition from finite to absolute spirit and the manner in which the Promethean attitude is still preserved but can be said to be partially purified, sublimated, or "spiritualized" by this transition. The realm of absolute spirit is the realm of self-conscious reflection upon our practices and the meaningful way in which we inhabit the world. If finite spirit remains entangled in nature, in absolute spirit as exemplified by art we find a "*unity* of nature and spirit—i.e., the immediate unity in sensuously intuitional form."[34] This unity is characterized as a mode of reflective self-understanding and self-knowledge, and Terry Pinkard helpfully calls art, religion, and philosophy "reflective institutions"[35] by means of which a society self-consciously reflects or contemplates its own form of life. The modes of absolute spirit are therefore in some respects modes that have transcended the practical relationship to nature toward more contemplative ways of reflecting on our experience. As Pinkard puts it, they are "a given community's reflection on its essential self-identity and its highest interests through the historical practices and institutions of art, religion, and philosophy."[36] Given that art, religion, and philosophy are preceded by a practical attempt to actualize freedom in politics, law, the state, and history, it is tempting to call them contemplative or theoretical modes that follow upon the practical activity. However illuminating, the Aristotelian distinction between *praxis* and *theoria* is not entirely appropriate for explaining this shift, since absolute spirit is already a higher unification of theory and practice, and does not leave the practical behind it. However, the practical aspect is no longer the one of subjugating nature in order to make oneself at home in the world. Furthermore, the very activity of self-contemplation maintains, in a different manner, a practical relationship to nature.

Through art, the subject is attempting not only to produce a beautiful object, but also to produce an object by means of which it may come to know itself better, and this twofold relationship involves both theoretical and practical components. In speaking of the universal need from which art emerges, Hegel states the following:

> The universal and absolute need from which art (on its formal side) springs has its origin in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness, i.e., that man draws out of himself and puts *before himself* what he is and whatever he is. Things in nature are only *immediate* and *single*, while man as spirit *duplicates* himself

> [verdoppelt *sich*], in that (i) he is as things in nature are, but (ii) he is just as much for himself; he sees himself, represents himself to himself, thinks, and only on the strength of this active placing himself before himself is he spirit.[37]

If self-knowledge requires a certain kind of subjective duplication—namely, insofar as the knowing subject is the one who knows and at the same time the object of the knowledge, art as a mode of self-knowledge requires a similar reduplication. In art, we come to know ourselves by first producing a duplicate of ourselves, objectifying ourselves so that we can contemplate that objectification. The desire for self-knowledge here no longer has a simply theoretical aspect, but a practical one as well in this very activity of reduplication. If in its theoretical manifestation the reduplication happens within consciousness, by virtue of which it becomes self-consciousness through a process of self-representation, in its practical aspect there is a productive, technical, and artificial creation of an artifact or work of art. As Hegel puts it, "man brings himself before himself by practical activity, since he has the impulse . . . to produce himself and therein equally to recognize himself. This aim he achieves by altering external things whereon he impresses the seal of his inner being."[38] By turning the wood or the marble into a sculpture of the human form, external things are spiritualized and take on the "seal" or "impression" of the human.

The Promethean attitude is therefore still present in Hegel's view of absolute spirit, even though it has been sublimated. We do not merely eat the external object, we do not merely appropriate it to our practical purposes, but neither do we let the object be what it is in relation to human artifice. Since the drive is one for self-contemplation or self-knowledge, the external object must be worked upon so that it is able to represent ourselves back to ourselves. The goal of spirit in the artist is therefore "to strip the external world of its inflexible foreignness [*ihre spröde Fremdheit*] and to enjoy in the shape of things only an external realization of himself."[39] Hegel argues that this need is to be found in primordial human impulses, and that the children are already, in many ways, displaying their Promethean tendencies when they attempt to produce effects that they themselves have caused upon a natural environment they are playing with. In a striking image, Hegel describes how "a boy throws stones into the river and now marvels at the circles drawn in the water as an effect in which he gains an intuition of something that is his own doing. This need runs through the most diversiform phenomena up to that mode of self-production in external things which is present in the work of art."[40] The child is not simply playing with stones, but experiencing the effects of her power upon nature and then contemplating her "own doing." It is one and the same need expressed in the child observing the circles produced in the water, and in our self-contemplation through works of art.

Therefore, it must be admitted that even through the purification that happens in the realm of absolute spirit, Hegel remains a partisan to the Promethean attitude. Our attitude toward nature is one toward something that we must transform by imposing a human form for the purposes of our own self-contemplation. The child is not a romantic, simply contemplating the beauty of the river in front of which she stands, but the beauty of the circles that attest to her freedom and activity. This Promethean attitude is most evident in Hegel's anti-romantic dismissal of the beauty of nature, which he argues is of a lower value than the forms of beauty that have transformed nature into something spiritual: "The beauty of art is *higher* than nature. The beauty of art is beauty *born of the spirit and born again*, and the higher the spirit and its productions stand above nature and its phenomena, the higher too is the beauty of art above that of nature."[41] Nowhere is this tendency more evident than in the famous anecdote that Heine tells in his *Confessions* about a meeting with Hegel: "One beautiful starry evening, we stood, the two of us, at a window and I, a young person of twenty-two, having just eaten well and drunken coffee, spoke rapturously about the stars, calling them the habitations of the blessed. The master [Hegel], however, mumbled to himself, 'The stars, ho! hum! the stars are just leprous spots glowing on the sky.'"[42] Heine, with youthful romantic enthusiasm, wants to see in the sky something elevated that fills us with wonder, as it did Kant himself, but Hegel is quick to disabuse him of any such feelings. Unless they have been transformed into objects by means of which we achieve self-contemplation, they do not retain the value ascribed to them by Heine's romantic longing.

However, in its contemplative and reflective status, it must be admitted that art does to some extent purify and spiritualize the violence found in the Promethean tendency. Art is not merely a practical and instrumental engagement with nature, since in one of its aspects it maintains a contemplative and self-reflexive interest, a kind of disinterestedness in relation to desire, appropriation, and consumption: "From the practical interest of desire, the interest of art is distinguished by the fact that it lets its object persist freely and on its own account, while desire converts it to its own use by destroying it."[43] Art, as a mode of absolute spirit, forms a middle space between the sensuous interest we have toward nature, and the fully intellectual interest of thought thinking itself: "What it wants is sensuous presence which indeed should remain sensuous, but liberated from the scaffolding of its purely material nature. Thereby the sensuous aspect of a work of art, in comparison with the immediate existence of things in nature, is elevated to a pure appearance, and the work of art stands in the middle between immediate sensuousness and ideal thought."[44] This elevation makes of art a purified form of the Promethean tendency, still active and practical in shaping nature toward human ends, but ends that must now be understood not practically, but theoretically as

self-contemplation, self-knowledge, or self-understanding. For Hegel, it is only thought, insofar as it has fully liberated itself from any admixture with the sensuous and attained a more perfect form of reflexivity, that is capable of fully undoing Promethean violence: "The universal is therefore *free* power; it is itself and takes its other within its embrace, but without *doing violence* to it; on the contrary, the universal is, in its other, in peaceful communion with itself."[45]

Heidegger, on the contrary, maintains throughout his career, but especially in his later work, an orphic attitude toward the natural, one that seeks to let the natural show itself without being defiled by thought, without being imposed upon by either representation or manipulation. The orphic attitude in question therefore also has a practical and theoretical component. Practical, in that it has as its purpose the avoidance of any contrivance, method, or scheme which would result in mastery and violence toward nature, theoretical in that it must search for a mode of thinking, often poetic, that does not representationally impose meaning upon the thing it is trying to apprehend. Therefore, the orphic attitude in question is set against the Promethean attitude one finds in the modern technological determination of nature. In this modern technological objectification, which we interpreted through the concept of *Gestell* in chapter 2, one finds the essential unity of these theoretical and practical aspects of the Promethean assault upon the natural: "As object of human representation, nature is set-toward human representation and is in this sense produced. Thought in this manner, producing is the basic trait of the objectification of nature."[46] Against the mathematical projection and representation of nature found modern physics, and the technological model of production that is its essence, Heidegger wants to alert us to a relationship to beings that lets them be what they are without imposition. In some senses, one may say that this is simply what Heidegger understood all along by phenomenology, and how he understood Husserl's famous call back "to the things themselves." Thus he already defines phenomenology in *Being and Time* as a kind of receptivity to the way in which things show themselves of their own accord, or "to let [*lassen*] that which shows itself be seen from itself [*von ihm selbst*] in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."[47] There is here, in "letting" [*lassen*] the phenomena show itself "from itself" [*von ihm selbst*], already the intimations of the *Gelassenheit* or letting-be that would offer a remedy to the thinking that becomes prevalent in the age of technology in which we live.

However, in the thirties and forties, after Heidegger's critique of the history of metaphysics is in place, and his understanding of its final destination as the "our knowledge of nature as such, and our lordship over nature,"[48] this new relationship of letting-be and releasement (*Gelassenheit*) becomes the means by which we are to overcome the modern Promethean attitude toward the natural, and toward being as such. But what exactly does it mean to let things

be things, to let them show themselves *from themselves*? Does this demand not return us to pre-Kantian dogmatic metaphysics, to some preestablished harmony between thought's access to entities and the way entities are given to us? Had not Kant taught us that the mind is active with regard to the objects of experience, and that any knowledge must involve "an act of spontaneity of the faculty of representation"?[49] Had not Hegel, in the very first argument of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, warned us of the futility of any attempt at "*immediate* or *receptive*"[50] knowledge, one that seeks to refrain from imposing universal structures and merely apprehends the immediate singularities given to consciousness in everyday experience? Heidegger's argument is, of course, that these very positions of German idealism are implicated in a representational mode of access that block any real access to things as things: "The thinghood of the thing, however, does not reside in the thing becoming the object of a representation, nor can the thinghood of the thing at all be determined by the objectivity of the object."[51] The metaphysics of subjectivity that is at work in German idealism predetermines the nature of things as representational content for subjectivity to such a degree that it completely undermines any real access to things. From its standpoint, it may seem that there is no access to the nature of things as they show themselves from themselves. In an explicit reference to Kant, Heidegger states:

> Our thinking has of course long been accustomed to *understate* the nature of the thing. The consequence, in the course of Western thought, has been that the thing is represented as an unknown X to which perceptible properties are attached. From this point of view, everything that already belongs to the gathering nature of this thing does, of course, appear as something that is afterward read into it.[52]

If we are to regain, or perhaps gain for the first time, access to entities as entities, we must relearn or learn for the first time what it means to let them be the entities that they are. This is essentially what I mean by Heidegger's orphic attitude—an attempt to find novel ways to access things so that the willful impositions that determine what they are may somehow be held back or undone.

More so than German idealism, it is modern natural science that fundamentally blocks access to things in contemporary society, insofar as "in the context of the formation of modern science, a definite interpretation of the thing acquired a uniquely privileged status, according to which the thing is material, a point of mass in motion in the pure space-time order."[53] The determination of things as matter in motion, with the added mathematical projection as the means by which they may be known or understood, "annihilates" our truer relationship to things. In his more nostalgic and quasi-romantic

moments, Heidegger seems to imply that there was a prior proximity to things that became undone by modern science and technology, that "shepherds live invisibly and outside of the desert of the desolate earth,"[54] and that this renewed relationship to things involves a call for us to "shepherd the mystery of Being."[55] This valorization of the pastoral and the primitive is a perennial feature and danger of the orphic attitude, as Hadot has made clear: "The Orphic attitude . . . seeks to preserve the living perception of nature; at the opposite extreme from the Promethean attitude, however, it often professes a primitivism that is not without danger either."[56] But at other moments in Heidegger's corpus, it seems as if there has never yet been a true relationship to things as things, that while one may poetically invoke the shepherd in a nostalgic privileging of the pastoral, the relationship that is being called for is something radically new, preparatory, and future-oriented: "In truth, however, the thing remains obstructed as thing, nullified and in this sense annihilated. This occurred and occurs so essentially that the things are not only no longer [*nicht mehr*] admitted as things, but the things have not yet [*noch nie*] ever been able to appear as things at all."[57] Things have never been allowed to be things, and the thinghood of the thing is as yet unthought. By letting things approach us from themselves, we are renewing, according to Heidegger, our relationship to the meaningful presence that is the world. This is because the thing now becomes the site for the worlding of the world, for the happening of meaningful presence. As he cryptically puts it: "The thing things the world [*Das Ding dingt Welt*] . . . When we let the thing in its thinging essence from out of the worlding world, then we commemorate the thing as thing. Thoughtfully remembering in this way, we allow the worlding essence of the thing to concernfully approach us."[58] By allowing things to meaningfully approach us from themselves, we open ourselves up to the meaningful presence in which they abide.

At this point, the language used by Heidegger invariably becomes poetic, and not philosophical in the stricter metaphysical sense of the term. He is trying to eschew representational, calculative, and explanatory thinking in terms of grounds and reasons, and explicitly so: "The first step to such vigilance is the step back from merely representational, i.e., explanatory thinking into commemorative thinking [*andenkende Denken*]."[59] Recall that for Hadot, the orphic attitude seeks to preserve some mystery by finding a mode of access that is not violent, a mode of access that is artful without being crafty, poetic without being technical. Heidegger does this by attempting to undo one of the foundational prejudices of philosophy—he aims to undo Plato's quarrel between philosophy and poetry and to readmit the poets into the city. Hölderlin takes the place of the philosopher-king. Of course, the exact nature of the relationship between thinking and poetizing in the later Heidegger is a complex and ambiguous affair. At times, he comes close to equating the

thinker and the poet in no uncertain terms: "The thinking is, however, poeticizing [*Das Denken jedoch ist Dichten*]—though not in the sense of poesy or song. The thinking of being is the primordial form of poeticizing."[60] At other times, he argues that there must remain an important distinction between thinking and poetizing: "Poetry and thinking meet each other in one and the same only when, and only as long as, they remain distinctly in the distinctness of their nature. The same never coincides with the equal, not even in the empty indifferent oneness of what is merely identical."[61] Regardless of the exact intricate relationship that makes thinking and poetizing the same but not equal or identical, it cannot be doubted that Heidegger attempts to approximate the two in a relationship that is much more intimate than has been commonplace in the history of philosophy. Because of this, his articulation of what exactly it means to gain an orphic proximity to things as things will bear important resemblances to poetry.

Heidegger's poetic mode of thinking seeks to return us to the relationship between world and things in his thinking of the fourfold (*das Geviert*). Exactly what the fourfold is, and its importance to Heidegger's later thinking, is an extremely contested question in Heidegger scholarship.[62] There can be no doubt that the fourfold bears a close relationship to the space of meaningful encounter to things, and therefore to the concept of world, and its later concept of the clearing. He makes this connection explicitly in the 1949 Bremen lecture: "We name the appropriating mirror-play of the single fold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, the world. The world essences in that it worlds."[63] The fourfold is therefore not a present-at-hand collection of extant entities—earth, sky, divinities, mortals—but a kind of transitive relationship of the event of meaningful encounter. The fourfold gathers its four "elements" or "aspects," but this gathering happens in relation to things: "The thing lets the fourfold abide. The thing things the world. Every thing lets the fourfold abide in something that each time abides from the single fold of the world."[64] Using the prominent examples of a jug and a bridge, Heidegger attempts to show how the thing lets each "element" abide within it, and relates the four of the fourfold into a unity or singleness that does not undermine their differences: "By thinging, the thing lets the united four, earth and sky, divinities and mortals, abide in the single fold of their fourfold."[65] While an exhaustive account of the fourfold is not my purpose here, especially since it has been done ably by Andrew Mitchell,[66] I only wish to show how certain aspects of nature and our relationship to nature show up within Heidegger's thinking of the fourfold. The earth, which we saw in connection to the "Origin of the Work of Art" as an element of concealment at strife with the unconcealment of world, is now included within the "concept" of world: "The earth is the building bearer, what nourishingly fructifies, tending waters and stones, plants and animals."[67] Not only is the element of strife missing,

but the earth becomes the nourishing and "tending" agent. As he puts it in "Building, Dwelling, Thinking": "Earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising up into plant and animal."[68] The earth is closely related to the Greek *phusis*, as it is not only the source of nourishment and growth, allowing the *phuo* of *phusis* to resonate, but the internal principle of motion "rising up" in plant and animal. The sky also takes on elements of the natural, but seems to be more closely aligned to the elemental aspects of nature, and to the cyclical and natural rhythms by means of which we experience time and the passing of seasons: "The sky is the path of the sun, the course of the moon, the gleam of the starts, the seasons of the year, the light and twilight of day, the dark and bright of the night, the favor of inclemency and the weather, drifting clouds, and blue depths of the ether."[69] By means of a renewed proximity to things as things, we will hopefully be able to let the resonances of nature present within it hold sway.

The purpose of this orphic attitude to nature within the fourfold is to counteract the Promethean tendencies of *Gestell*, of positionality or enframing. Heidegger puts this in terms of a guardianship (*Wahrnis*) that is closely related to truth (*Wahrheit*). Positionality or *Gestell* is a form of unguarding (*Verwahrlosung*) of the thing, turning it into objects that can be used up at will: "*In the essence of positionality, the unguarding of the thing as thing takes place*."[70] This lack of guardianship of the thing is related to the fact that the thing is no longer thought of as the bearer of any truth whatsoever, in fact, it has been completely severed from its relationship to truth: "The requisitioning of positionality places itself before the thing, leaving it unguarded as thing, truthless."[71] Only as completely truthless can the thing show up as something that can be used, exchanged, mastered, and manipulated, as if it were simply prime matter. Our task is therefore to refrain from all willing, imposing, and projecting, in order to make way for a new proximity to the thing and to world, a proximity Heidegger interprets through the concept of "nearness": "Thus positionality disguises the nearing nearness of the world in the thing."[72] At stake here is whether or not humans can dwell meaningfully in the world, to dwell with things as things, upon the earth and under the sky. As Heidegger states in an undeveloped and somewhat cryptic thought, the essence of the human is at stake in this retrieval of an orphic attitude toward the natural. It is as if, in the planetary assault upon nature that goes on under the rubric of *Gestell*, what is at stake is the annihilation of the human as we have understood it up to now: "It concerns the question of in what way nature, in allowing the objectification of its domain, defends itself against technology by bringing about the annihilation of the human-essence."[73] The orphic attitude is therefore an attempt to save the human essence from the destitution and annihilation it is suffering under its own Promethean attitude toward nature and itself.

INHABITING THE WORLD: INTELLIGIBLE MEDIATION *OR* DWELLING WITHOUT WHY

We saw in the previous section how Hegel and Heidegger offer contrasting attitudes toward what ought to be our appropriate relationship to *nature*. We will now turn to the more difficult question of what our proper relationship to the *world* ought to be in their respective philosophies—what it means to dwell in or to inhabit a world. I will orient this inquiry by means of the metaphor of dwelling, inhabiting, or being at home in the world, a metaphor that one finds prevalent in different ways throughout the work of both Hegel and Heidegger. In our investigations of Hegel, we have already encountered such a metaphor in his various definitions of freedom as a kind of being at home with oneself in one's other, or as he puts it: "This is the *Idea's* being with itself, the capacity to revert into itself, to coincide with its other and yet to be at home with itself in the other. This capacity, this power, to be at home with oneself in the negative of oneself is also the *freedom* of man."[74] The task of philosophy is a kind of reconciliation with the world as such, a reconciliation that satisfies the subject by making her at home in the world and free in the world in such a way that will not entirely negate the externality and exteriority of the world—thus to be at one with oneself while being in relation to an other than oneself. For Heidegger, by contrast, philosophy is intrinsically related to a not-being-at-home in the world. That is, while Heidegger will have a normative account of what it means to authentically and appropriately dwell in the world, this mode of dwelling must acknowledge, rather than cover up, the essential homelessness from which it springs: "Homelessness [*Heimatlosigkeit*] is coming to be the destiny of the world. . . . This homelessness is specifically evoked from the destiny of Being in the form of metaphysics, and through metaphysics is simultaneously entrenched and covered up as such."[75] For Heidegger, the metaphysical drive to be at home in the world that is operative in Hegel's philosophy as the consummation of metaphysics is actually an evasion and denial of a deeper "essential homelessness of man."[76] Therefore, just as we were offered a choice between an orphic attunement to the secrets of nature or a Promethean appropriation of nature, we once again find two opposing attitudes to what it would mean to inhabit a world. The task of philosophy is, for Hegel, a becoming at home in the world, and for Heidegger, a mode of dwelling that does not betray the essential homelessness of the human.

Let us now turn to how these metaphors operate in Hegel and Heidegger in order to see what conceptual relationships they entail for each of these two thinkers. To be at home with oneself in the other is for Hegel a definition of *freedom*. This definition is to be found throughout his later writings,

regardless of whether the context is one of a political nature or a description of the purity and freedom of the logical categories of thought: "Thoughts are pure thoughts. Thus spirit relates purely to itself and is therefore free, for freedom is precisely this: to be at home with oneself in one's other."[77] The metaphor of being at home in the world pervades his *Aesthetics*, as when Hegel describes the secularization of the subject matter of art that happens in Dutch painting's portrayal of the prosaic and the ephemeral elements of modern life as a kind of "being-at-home," both as "*Zu-Haus-Sein*" and "*Einheimischsein*."[78] In each one of these various usages, to be at home with oneself in otherness is a model of freedom that is not *solely* to be understood as Kantian self-determination. Rather, the model is one of reconciliation or *Versöhnung*.[79] The pull of philosophy is one that ought to move us away from *Entfremdung* or alienation toward *Versöhnung* or reconciliation. The world is stripped of its appearance as something alien and made hospitable for human dwelling. This is Hegel's formal definition of freedom as an overcoming of our alienation: "On its purely formal side, it consists in this, that in what confronts the subject there is nothing alien and it is not a limitation or a barrier; on the contrary, the subject finds himself in it."[80] This is what it means, according to Hegel, to have a subject that is "reconciled with the world."[81] In a strictly literal interpretation of the metaphor, this indeed involves the production of the technological, economic, social, and political conditions under which the world can become habitable. We make structures to shield ourselves from the elements, tools to harness the forces of nature in order to feed and clothe ourselves, cities in which we may trade and live, and political institutions in which we adjudicate our recognitive relations to one another. However, in all of these manifestations, the goal of freedom as being and home in the world with one's others remains finite:

> Now man's physical needs, as well as his knowing and willing, do indeed get a satisfaction in the world and do resolve in a free way the antithesis of subjective and objective, of inner freedom and externally existent necessity. But nevertheless the content of this freedom and satisfaction remains restricted, and thus this freedom and self-satisfaction retain too an aspect of finitude. But where there is finitude, opposition and contradiction always break out again afresh, and satisfaction does not get beyond being relative.[82]

This suggests that, within the domain of finitude, we can never *fully* be at home in the world. Otherness here remains recalcitrant—hunger returns, the natural elements overtake our structures, and cities and civilizations come into being and perish.

As we have seen before, in the transition from finite to infinite or absolute spirit, there is a qualitative shift in our capacity for freedom. This means that,

surprisingly, it is only in the realm of absolute spirit, only in the domains of art, religion, and philosophy, that the human is truly free and at home in the fullest sense. This is not to suggest that we ought to ascetically reject the finite world, but that the satisfaction of our true and highest needs of self-knowledge and self-comprehension can only be fulfilled through an elevation beyond the realm of the finite: "What man seeks in this situation, ensnared here as he is in finitude on every side, is the region of a higher, more substantial, truth, in which all oppositions and contradictions in the finite can find their final resolution, and freedom its full satisfaction. This is the region of absolute, not finite, truth."[83] Even politics and its culmination in the State, which Hegel infamously comes close to deifying, cannot ultimately support our highest aspirations. In the realm of finitude, the contradictions and oppositions he is speaking of, which he enumerates as the contradictions between freedom and necessity, spirit and nature, knowledge and object, and law and impulse, perpetually reemerge. The highest form of reconciliation can only be satisfactorily achieved in philosophy: "But philosophy enters into the heart of the self-contradictory characteristics, knows them in their essential nature . . . and it sets them in the harmony and unity which is truth. To grasp this concept of truth is the task of philosophy."[84] Only thinking about thinking is ultimately capable of true reconciliation, unity, and harmony.

The nature of this reconciliation is difficult to express, since it gets us into the heart of Hegel's dialectical thinking. By suggesting that such a reconciliation only happens in the sphere of thinking, we must not understand that we come to stoically comprehend, say, the true distinct domains of nature and spirit, of necessity and freedom, and can then demarcate precisely that which is within our power and accept that which is not. Rather, the reconciliation is accomplished by means of a conceptual recognition of the process by which the mediation of various oppositions is always accomplishing itself, but never fully accomplished in the realm of the finite. The task of philosophical and conceptual mediation is therefore one in which we recognize that the dichotomies present in our contemporary culture do not have inherent validity in their current dichotomous and contradictory forms, but only in their dialectical interdependence: "If general culture has run into such a contradiction, it becomes the task of philosophy to supersede the oppositions, i.e., to show that neither the one alternative in its abstraction, nor the other in the like one-sidedness, possesses truth, but that they are both self-dissolving [*Sichselbstauflösende*]."[85] The highest form of reconciliation is therefore not a static achievement in the realm of the finite—there is no end (in the sense of cessation) of history or the advent of an actual, final resolution, but rather a meta-conceptual recognition of the dialectical process that is always already at work in the domain of the finite: "Truth lies only in the reconciliation and mediation of both, and that this mediation is no mere demand,

but what is absolutely accomplished and is ever self-accomplishing."[86] It is important to stress the fact that it is always and repeatedly self-accomplishing in the realm of the finite, and not something already finished. The mediation that is accomplished by philosophical thinking is therefore happening at a meta-logical or meta-conceptual level, which is another way of understanding why Hegel sees the absolute idea as fundamentally *method*.

To understand the absolute mediation as a meta-conceptual method is to see the realization of the dialectical process and movement of mediation that is always at work in nature and in history: "What is to be considered here as method is only the movement of the Concept itself, the nature of which movement has already been cognized."[87] In other words, we come to be at home in the world by recognizing the dialectical interdependence between subjectivity and objectivity, between our thinking and doing and the world in which such thinking and doing takes place. As he puts it at the end of the *Phenomenology*:

> Spirit, however, has shown itself to us to be neither merely the withdrawal of self-consciousness into its pure inwardness [*Zurückziehen des Selbstbewußtseins in seine reine Innerlichkeit*], nor the mere submergence of self-consciousness into substance, and the non-being of its difference; but Spirit is *this movement* of the Self which empties itself of itself [*sich seiner selbst entäußert*] and sinks itself into its substance.[88]

I have cited this passage before in the context of understanding Hegel's identity-claim between substance and subject, but it is important for our purposes here to stress the recognition that spirit is to be understood as a *movement*, as a *process* of actualization, and that it is this very same recognition that moves us beyond the domain of the finite to domain of the absolute or infinite. We are at home in the world when we realize the ever-accomplishing dialectic between subjectivity and the world, and do so by holding together the variety of failed manifestations of this dialectical attempt at unification and mediation, failures that reveal the *difference* that must be preserved in any mediated *unity*.

For Heidegger, by contrast, any genuine inhabiting of or dwelling in the world must pass through an acknowledgment of our essential homelessness. Heidegger's first interpretation of this homelessness, within the analytic of Dasein in *Being and Time*, is performed through the fundamental mood of anxiety as world-disclosive. Unlike the mood of fear, which may have a particular object or target, anxiety initially appears completely indefinite and indeterminate regarding its content. One is afraid of spiders, or of heights, but that about which one is anxious is much more difficult, if not impossible, to determine. On further analysis, Heidegger suggests that the reason for this inability to determine a particular object of anxiety is due to the fact

that anxiety is about our being in the world as such: "That which anxiety is anxious about is Being-in-the-world itself."[89] One is anxious about the very fact of existence, the very 'that-it-is' of the fact that things are and make sense, and that one meaningfully inhabits this domain of existence and sense-making. However, in anxiety, one experiences the very ground of this making sense of things, and this experience of the ground of making sense displaces meaningfulness just enough to make the world sink into insignificance. Because of this, Heidegger argues that "in anxiety one feels '*uncanny*' [*unheimlich*]."[90] This uncanniness is obviously linked to a feeling of not-being-at-home: "Being-in enters into the existential 'mode' of 'not-at-home' [*Un-zuhause*.]"[91] In our everyday comportment toward things, in our plans and projects, we actually flee from this feeling of uncanniness by means of the pacification and distraction that happens through our absorption in everyday concerns. Nevertheless, moments of insight can break through to this unhomely and uncanny dimension that is at work underground behind our everyday concernful dealings with entities in their context of signification.

This relationship between a deeper "ground" of our experience that reveals something about which we are anxious and feel uncanny, and the pacification that happens as we flee toward our involvement in the world, is in *Being and Time* primarily indexed to the analytic of Dasein. However, it comes to reveal something more significant about the very domain of meaningfulness that we may call the world. What anxiety reveals is that underneath such a realm of intelligibility, significance, and meaning, in the very "that-it-isness" of sense, there is something without meaning or signification: "Anxiety discloses an insignificance of the world."[92] I like to think of this relationship as analogous to what happens when we repeat a word that makes complete sense to us so many times that we are capable, through repetition, to render it completely meaningless. We notice thereby something of the very fact of sense-making, namely, that behind it there lurks something ultimately fragile and without sense. However, in anxiety, it is not just one word or one unit of sense that sinks into insignificance, but the totality of the meaningful context in which sense-making happens: "The world in which I exist has sunk into insignificance; and the world which is thus disclosed is one in which entities can be freed only in the character of having no involvement. Anxiety is anxious in the face of the 'nothing' of the world."[93] This deeply uncomfortable insight leads us to flee it and cover it up, and this covering is the very thing that we do when we inhabit the more pacified and meaningful domain of our everyday existence. As we turn toward Heidegger's thinking of the history of being as metaphysics, this same relationship still holds, but the appearance it has of an anthropological grounding in Dasein takes on the import of a more world-historical dimension.

This can be seen by thinking of metaphysics as somehow implicated, as Hegel himself makes apparent, in the desire to be at home everywhere in the world, and thereby to either cover up, flee, or metaphysically undo the essential homelessness that may lurk in our relationship to the world. This is already clear in his text *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. Here Heidegger begins his discussion of the metaphysical understanding of world by citing Novalis's famous romantic definition of philosophy in a fragment from *Das Algemeine Brouillon*: "Philosophy is really homesickness—*the desire to everywhere be at home*."[94] Heidegger goes on to interpret this fragment in the following manner: philosophy is essentially homesickness, and fundamentally oriented toward the whole, or toward the world: "to be at home everywhere means to be at once and at all times within the whole. We name this 'within the whole' and its character of wholeness the *world*."[95] True to the romantic tendency in Novalis, Heidegger does not want to immediately equate philosophy to an actually accomplished being-at-home-in-the-world, but rather with the homesickness that restlessly *desires* to be at home in the world. Our finitude is such that we never will attain the absolute relation of being perfectly at home in the other, rather, we remain in an in-between stage that Heidegger characterizes as the essence of our finitude:

> This is where we are driven in our homesickness: to being as a whole. Our very being is this restlessness. We have somehow always already departed toward the whole, or better, we are always already on the way to it. But we are driven on, i.e., we are somehow simultaneously torn back by something, resting in a gravity that draws us downward. We are underway to this "as a whole." We ourselves are this underway, this transition, this "neither the one nor the other."[96]

Therefore, if for Heidegger philosophy and metaphysics (in this text often used interchangeably) are both to be understood as the "urge to be at home everywhere,"[97] but an acknowledgment of our finitude requires that we think of ourselves as always inhabiting that transition but never arriving fully, never reaching home, then metaphysics is asking too much of our human essence.

In the later Heidegger metaphysics seeks to be at home everywhere in the world by establishing epochal principles of intelligibility that ground the meaning of beings or entities. Each one of these principles or grounds is, as we have previously seen, a certain kind of covering over or evasion of a deeper ground of the truth of beings. In terms of our guiding metaphor, metaphysics seeks to be intelligibly at home in the world by means of an evasion of the more fundamental experience in which we are truly homeless in the midst of what exists. Intelligibility thus allows us to come to grips with the world meaningfully, but is nonetheless the site of an evasion. Each

metaphysical historical configuration offers a reason or ground (*Grund*) upon which the intelligibility of being rests:

> Rather, inasmuch as it conceals its essence, being allows something else to come to the fore, namely ground/reason [*Grund*] in the shape of *archai*, *aitiai*, of *rationes*, of *causae*, of Principles, *Urshachen* and Rational grounds. In withdrawing being leaves behind these shapes of ground/reason whose provenance goes unrecognized. Yet this lack of recognition is not experienced as such, for it is recognized by everyone that all beings have a ground/reason.[98]

Just as in the everyday experience of Dasein, we flee from the uncanny feeling of anxiety that puts us face-to-face with the deeper lack of significance of the world, in metaphysics we establish principles that allow us to flee from that very same experience, although never fully. The principles therefore take the place, so to speak, of an emptiness—they are to some extent stopgap measures that secure a foundation where there truly is none. Being itself, and this means the world as such and as a whole in this particular text, is fundamentally groundless: "Every founding [*Begründung*] and even every appearance of foundability has inevitably degraded being to some sort of a being. Being qua being remains ground-less [*Sein bleibt als Sein grund-los*]. Ground/reason stays from being, namely, as a ground/reason that would first found being, it stays off and away. Being: the a-byss [*Sein: der Ab-Grund*]."[99] By stating that *Sein* and *Abgrund* are the same, Heidegger is accepting that no further reason can be given, no further "why" can be answered to the problem of the very happening of a meaningful world.

Nevertheless, Heidegger does not go so far as simply accepting our uncanny homelessness and thereby completely giving up on the project of dwelling in the world. The question here is about how one interprets the project of making a home in the world. The metaphysical tendency is for Heidegger largely a violent one, since this original nonrecognition of the groundless character of being in favor of the principles that offer entities an intelligible ground is a kind of imposition. The metaphysical desire to be at home in the world is therefore a misguided attempt to force the world into a model of habitation that is not commensurable to it, and therefore ends in the planetary devastation that is modern technological mastery of nature and world domination. Against this model, the later Heidegger wants to suggest a mode of inhabiting and dwelling (*Wohnen*) that does not cover over the ungrounded worlding of the world. Here, dwelling means to inhabit with the kind of receptivity we saw in Heidegger's account of *Gelassenheit*: "To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. The fundamental character of dwelling [*Wohnens*] is this sparing and preserving [*Schonen*]."[100] Our relationship to

things, and to each of the aspects of the fourfold, takes on the character of genuine dwelling when we refrain from the willful imposition that is the grounding procedure of metaphysics. The language he uses to describe this relationship is telling—it is either receptive to that which it is oriented, or negative in relation to our violence and imposition. Mortals dwell when "they save [*retten*] the earth" and do not "master the earth" nor "subjugate it."[101] We dwell when we "receive [*empfangen*] the sky as sky" and "do not turn night into day nor day into harassed unrest."[102] Mortals dwell when they "wait [*warten*] for intimations" of divinities and "do not make their gods themselves."[103] Each one of these relationships of dwelling contain an unmistakable pattern: a releasement or letting-be of things as they are, together with a negative relationship to or refusal of our theoretical and practical impositions upon the world.

To sum up, for Heidegger the world is "without ground" or "without why," and the experience of this fact is the reason why we feel anxiety toward our being-in-the-world. Any genuine dwelling in the world ought to be a dwelling without why. He says this explicitly in the Bremen lectures, where he writes: "The worlding of the world is neither explicable by nor grounded upon anything other than itself. This impossibility is not a matter of our human thinking being incapable of such explaining and grounding."[104] That is, this is not merely an epistemological problem or a lack to be imputed on our own capacities or incapacities, as if we would only be able to find the reason for the worlding of the world if given greater insight and more time, or a different intuitive intellect. Of course, this is a perilous claim, and taken independent of the context of Heidegger's entire philosophical effort, it appears as something unsupportable. In fact, the very statement that being or world are radically abysmal, and without ground or why, means that any question regarding the reason or ground for this claim cannot be answered. We can uncover such as abyss retroactively by means of an interpretation of the metaphysical principles and mechanisms that cover it over, and we can perhaps experience this groundlessness in the uncanny mood of anxiety, but there is no other rational appeal that can be made for this phenomenological insight. At the most abstract and highest-altitude level of the confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger, we appear to be in the position that Hegel thought we ought best avoid: a bare assurance against a bare assurance.[105] For Hegel, being is ultimately intelligible, and we can be at home in the world by realizing the process by which intelligibility and truth become manifest. For Heidegger, this is just one last stage in a long history of covering over the fundamental ungroundedness of the happening of the world. The very fact that things are intelligible, that they make sense, is not itself something intelligible. As these are both the accounts given by their first principles, by the *idea* in Hegel and

being in Heidegger, there is no further appeal immanent to their thinking that we can make.

At this point, it may be worth returning to the beginning of this investigation, to the very holistic aspirations of philosophy from which we began the book. There, I argued that Hegel and the early Heidegger conceived of philosophy as fundamentally oriented toward the world as a whole, and that this holism required, on their part, some account of nature as a domain about which philosophy ought not to remain silent. As the concepts of nature and world became bifurcated in modernity, the aspiration of philosophy as an account of the whole required some form of reconciliation between the domain of the world which we meaningfully inhabit and the domain of nature. But as we saw in chapter 2, while Heidegger continued to stress the relationship between philosophy, metaphysics, and the world as a whole, this holism is eventually abandoned by Heidegger in favor of a mode of thinking that is less than, and different from, philosophy traditionally understood. The aspiration toward thinking the truth of the whole is abandoned by Heidegger together with the aspirations of metaphysics, since the determination of truth of the whole is now identified with metaphysics and its principles. This does not mean that he abandons the thought of world, but rather that the world is now to be understood in a different, non-metaphysical, manner. This is most evident in the way in which Heidegger turns toward *things* as the domain from which the worlding of the world, and the fourfold, ought to be understood: "The thing lets the fourfold abide. The thing things the world. Every thing lets the fourfold abide in something that each time abides from the single fold of the world."[106] The focal point of his later work thus becomes a renewed attempt to let things be in such a way that the worlding of the world that abides in them is set free.

This preoccupation with things, and to a letting-be that allows them to "concernfully approach us"[107] takes the place of the representational impositions upon the thing that characterize metaphysics. Thinking must give up the drive of reason toward the unconditional, and rather remain conditioned in the sense of "thinged" (*bedingt*): "Thinking in this way we are met by the thing as thing. We are, in the strict sense of the word, conditioned [*Be-Dingten*]. We have left the arrogance of everything unconditional behind us."[108] Dwelling in the world becomes, for Heidegger, an attentiveness to that which he calls humble or slight or small (*gering*) in world: "Humans as the mortals are the first to dwell in the world as world. Only what is slight of world [*Nur was aus Welt gering*] ever becomes a thing."[109] It becomes obvious in these passages that the aspirations here are directly set up against the grand holistic aspirations of philosophy. If the world is to show up, it will not be in any totalizing attempt to capture, know, conceptualize, or even glimpse the whole of what

is. The worlding of the world must be attentively experienced by that which is opened up by things as things. Dwelling in the world has lost all aspirations toward the "manifestness as such and as a whole" that was the target concept of metaphysical thinking, and "dwelling itself is always a staying with things."[110] While Heidegger's main examples of things that open up the fourfold are always artifactual, such as bridges and jugs, at other places he makes clear that the concept of thing cuts across any distinction between natural and artificial entities—between *phusis* and *techne*. "Tree and pond, stream and mountain"[111] is no less a thing than is a jug, a bench, a bridge, or a plow. Any attempt to see how all of these "things" fit into a greater whole, and thereby to determine a principle for what makes them all the things that they are, brings us immediately back to metaphysics and onto-theology. He argues that it will only be in our attentiveness to things that we can renew a relationship to the worlding of the world in an age of technology: "Staying with things *is the only way* in which the fourfold stay with the fourfold is accomplished at any time in simple unity."[112]

If Heidegger denies to thinking the arrogance of the unconditioned and the task of thinking the whole, Hegel is true, to the very end, to the holistic aspirations of philosophy that inaugurated Western metaphysics. Philosophy remains systematic—a circle of circles—with each of its spheres—nature, spirit, and logic—itself a systematic circle whose end presupposes the beginning of its proximate science: "Each of the parts of philosophy is a philosophical whole, a circle coming to closure within itself, but in each of its parts the philosophical idea exists in a particular determinacy or element. The individual circle, simply because it is in itself a totality, also breaks through the boundary of its element and founds a further sphere. The whole thus presents itself as a circle of circles."[113] His philosophy remains systematic, and that means for him that it is a whole whose character involves not only totality and unity, but a harmonious coordination of its parts. However, his particular version of the holistic aspiration of philosophy is distinctive in regards to the way it relates to its content (*Inhalt*). In one sense, one may say that since philosophy is holistic, everything is included within it, that the content of philosophy is anything and everything that exists. From this perspective, it seems important that nothing be "left out" of the philosophical system. There are statements that make it seem as if the content of philosophy is, strictly speaking, anything and everything within the world: "It is just as important that philosophy come to understand that its content [*Inhalt*] is none other than the basic content that has originally been produced and reproduces itself in the sphere of the living spirit, a content turned into a *world* [Welt]."[114] In this sense, the entirety of the content that is present in the "sphere of living spirit" is presented in a systematic way and therefore reorganized from the finite and contingent manner in which it appeared empirically, thereby turning it

into an organized "world"—which Hegel must mean here in the sense of an organized whole, a *cosmos*.

However, to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to also insist that from a different standpoint, it may be appropriately claimed that for Hegel philosophy *lacks any distinctive content of its own*. That is because any content that it takes up must first be taken up concretely by another empirical science in the sphere of the finite. Therefore, Hegel is simultaneously capable of claiming that philosophy lacks any proper object: "Philosophy lacks the advantage from which the other sciences benefit, namely the ability to *presuppose* both its *objects* as immediately endorsed by representation of them and an acknowledge *method* of knowing."[115] Mathematics may begin by demarcating a domain of mathematical objects and a set of demonstrative and inductive methods by means of which such objects are to be proven and known. Philosophy lacks any such assurances. This is because philosophy must await the workings of the human spirit upon objects and the prior production of representations upon which it can operate. Philosophy is a second-order holistic operation upon the various forms of knowing and doing that we engage in within the world: "Chronologically speaking consciousness produces for itself *representations* of objects prior to generating concepts of them. What is more, only by passing *through* the process of representing and by turning *towards* it, does *thinking* spirit progress to knowing by way of thinking and to comprehending [*Begreifen*]."[116] That is, philosophy cannot simply work upon the world directly, but must in a certain sense operate upon the first-order operations of the understanding and of representation, subsequently reorganizing such knowledge into a systematic whole by means of the concept and the idea present within them.

This places philosophy is a curious relationship vis-à-vis the empirical sciences: on the one hand, it is dependent upon them for the content that it will systematically organize, on the other hand, it is autonomous in that the principles of organization are not externally lifted from the empirical sciences themselves. Here is how Hegel puts the relationship between the *Philosophy of Nature* systematically understood, and the various empirical natural sciences upon which it depends:

> Not only must philosophy be in agreement with our empirical knowledge of Nature, but the origin and formation of the Philosophy of Nature presupposes and is conditioned by empirical physics. However, the course of a science's origin and the preliminaries of its construction are one thing, which the science itself is another. In the latter, the former can no longer appear as the foundation of the science; here, the foundation must be the necessity of the Concept.[117]

We can see here that philosophy does not produce or deduce an organized whole, a world, from within its own resources. It takes on the content of the empirical sciences—of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, historiography, economics, and political science—and attempts to demonstrate the organic unity of the whole by showing the necessary transitions from particular stages and conceptions to others. In that sense, it may be said to both lack a content of its own, and to include within it any content that is the result of a human theoretical or practical interaction with the things of this world. In that way, philosophy maintains its original holistic aspirations while acknowledging the various divisions and specialization that have, throughout history, "carved out" spheres of knowledge from the philosophical domain into the province of specialized sciences. Another way that Hegel describes this relation is by claiming that philosophy is ultimately a kind of "recollection [*Erinnerung*]"[118] that works upon the various previous workings of spirit, while showing their systematic interconnection. Philosophy looks back at the various moments and shows the necessity of the movement and process that was at work in the various stages of actualization. Its success, of course, presupposes that this process is not a contingent and random set of events, but that at work within it is the dialectical movement of the idea as infinite negative self-relation.

DISMANTLING THE WORLD: AGAINST THE HOLISTIC ASPIRATIONS OF PHILOSOPHY

To what extent is the Hegelian holistic project, even in its broadest outlines if not in its details, believable or compelling today? While there have been some attempts to rehabilitate Hegel's philosophy in the contemporary Anglo-American context, scholars have largely tended to focus on Hegel's social philosophy of spirit while jettisoning Hegel's philosophy of nature as outdated.[119] Such an approach largely eschews the systematic holism of the Hegelian system, as well as the ways in which nature and spirit are closely intertwined within his philosophy. Some aspects of Hegelian holism may survive here and there, as in Wilfrid Sellars's definition of the aims of philosophy in his programmatic "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man": "The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term."[120] To a large extent, however, there has been considerable resistance within the broader philosophical community to Hegelian systematicity, a resistance that is in large part due to the suspicion that developed in the second half of the nineteenth century and intensified throughout the twentieth century toward the holistic aspirations of philosophy. The very idea

that philosophy ought to be oriented toward the world as an organized whole has come to be seen as implicated in an outdated and dangerous project of metaphysical totalization. While Heidegger is one of the most influential thinkers to make such a claim, he is by no means the only one responsible for this change in sensibility. There are various strands of influence that have led philosophers of the last century to abandon the holistic aspirations of philosophy. One may say, without hyperbole, that the very notion of the "world" as an organized whole has been systematically and meticulously dismantled in the twentieth century. While the details of each of these strands would require much more time than I have available here to fully elaborate, in this section I will briefly outline some different types of arguments that have led to the dismantling of the pretensions of philosophy for capturing the world in thought systematically. I will cluster these arguments into six distinct groups of influential critiques of this holistic aspiration: Nietzschean, political, postmodern, pragmatic, historical-scientific, and left-Heideggerian critiques of the holistic aspirations of philosophy and of the very idea of a systematic philosophical holism.

The Nietzschean critique bears important resemblances to Heidegger's critique of metaphysics, and it is clear that Heidegger's own transformation of his conception of metaphysics was deeply influenced in the 1930s by his reading of and lectures on Nietzsche. According to Nietzsche, the metaphysical drive toward truth, unity, coherence, and totality involves a falsification of the world and the imposition of stability upon a reality that is ultimately chaotic and in a state of pure becoming. The human mind projects stability and order upon a world that is not stable or orderly, a projection that involves, in the words of the early Nietzsche, "the construction of a pyramidal order based on castes and degrees, the creation of a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, definitions of borders, which now confronts the other, sensuously perceived world as something firmer, more general, more familiar, more human."[121] Nietzsche therefore radicalizes Kant's dichotomy between the understanding as producing concepts of regularity and the intuitively given world in order to argue, against Kant, that the understanding is ultimately a metaphysical falsification of the sphere of becoming.[122] Kant's regulative ideas, which of course include the concept of world and the drive toward the unconditioned and totalization, become one among many regulative fictions:

> What separates me most deeply from the metaphysicians is: I don't concede that the "I" is what thinks. Instead, I take the *I itself to be a construction of thinking*, of the same rank as "matter," "thing," "substance," "individual," "purpose," "number": in other words to be only a *regulative fiction* with the help of which a kind of constancy and thus "knowability" is inserted into, *invented into*, a world of becoming.[123]

The human mind, especially in weaker individuals, thus attempts to become at home in the world, to cope with the chaos of existence, by means of a falsification that imposes unity, totality, and coherence, attempting to turn the world of becoming into a habitable cosmos. The source of such a metaphysical desire is to be found in a being's inability to live with dangerous truths, that is, the will to live is the ultimate arbiter of our metaphysical falsification, as he elaborates in *Beyond Good and Evil*: "Without accepting the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live."[124] Nietzsche's understanding of our holistic aspirations is that they are ultimately regulative fictions imposed upon reality, ones that satisfy the desire to live in a world that is orderly, coherent, and whole. We desperately desire that the world be a meaningful place within which to dwell, but that desire is not reflected back by a recalcitrant and chaotic reality.

In the twentieth century, the rise of totalitarian regimes also led to a serious *political* suspicion of the very concept of totality that is to be found in reason's drive toward the unconditioned, and in Hegel's systematization of philosophy as a holistic totality. Some versions of this critique are quite crude, in that they immediately identify the drive toward the unconditioned and totality with the political totalitarian project, without any more subtle mediation between a metaphysical claim and its political instantiation. Such was Popper's account of Hegel in *The Open Society and its Enemies*,[125] replete with misreadings and simplifications, that argued for a direct implication of Hegel's holistic historicism and philosophy of the state with the advent of modern totalitarianism. Nevertheless, even more subtle readers of Hegel such as Theodor Adorno were able to maintain a direct connection between the drive toward totality and systematicity on the one hand, and totalitarianism on the other, as he does when he writes with Horkheimer in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* that "enlightenment is totalitarian as only as system can be."[126] Adorno's entire philosophical output, from his 1931 inaugural lecture to his 1966 *Negative Dialectics*, can be seen as a rigorous polemic against the claims of totality and what he calls identity-thinking. He begins "The Actuality of Philosophy" with the statement that "whoever chooses philosophy as a profession today must first reject the illusion that earlier philosophical enterprises began with: that the power of thought is sufficient to grasp the totality of the real."[127] While he continues to think immanently and carefully through Hegelian thought and Hegel's texts, Adorno does so in order to show the ways in which Hegelian dialectical thinking exemplifies the totalitarian drive to absorb, subsume, and erase difference and singularity in the name of identity. Philosophy's holistic tendencies actually exemplify, in the realm of thought, the totalizing tendencies of the totalizing social reality extant under contemporary capitalism.

Inverting Hegel's claim that the true is the whole, Adorno thereby bluntly suggests that "the whole is the false."[128] The claims of totality are not commensurable to the world, they falsify the world, since they find their sources, as in Nietzsche, within our own totalizing tendencies, and not in anything to which the world itself can be commensurable.

A very different line of criticisms of the totalizing drive of reason can be found within the American pragmatist tradition. As William James explicates in his 1908 Hibbert lectures published as *A Pluralistic Universe*,[129] much of the spirit of pragmatism can be understood as a sustained philosophical reaction against the monistic rationalist tendencies not only of Hegel himself, but of the nineteenth-century British idealism of Green, Bradley, and McTaggart. Against the tendency to subsume the entirety of experience under a monistic rationalist whole, pragmatism admits of different ways and modes of inquiry and existence, resulting in a confrontation between what Williams calls the "all-form" of the monism and the "each-form" of pluralism. Affirming a piecemeal empirical approach to each element of our experience yields a pluralistic world that is not coherently coordinated into a systematic whole. He explains his pluralistic view of the world-whole in the following terms: "Pragmatically interpreted, pluralism or the doctrine that it [i.e. the universe] is many means only that the sundry parts of reality *may be externally related.* . . . Things are 'with' one another in many ways, but nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything."[130] Against monism and the metaphysical tendency to subsume everything under one principle or system, pragmatism sees in the piecemeal way of approaching the world a sign of the multiplicity and plurality that exists in the universe, or what could be more appropriately termed the multiverse rather than a universe. This long pluralist tradition includes variants that are even more radical, as is the case in the extension of Dewey's thought that we find in Richard Rorty. Rorty goes so far as to claim that the very notion of "the world" is the result of a dualism between conceptual scheme and content that has been undermined by the work of Dewey, Wittgenstein, Quine, and Sellars. The philosophical upshot, according to Rorty, is that we should completely abandon any notion of the "world" as that toward which our thought should truthfully correspond:

> I can now express the same point by saying that the notion of "the world" that is correlative with the notion of "conceptual framework" is simply the Kantian notion of a thing-in-itself, and that Dewey's dissolution of the Kantian distinctions between receptivity and spontaneity and between necessity and contingency thus leads naturally to the dissolution of the true realistic believer's notion of "the world."[131]

The world is, in Rorty's phrase, "well lost." What we get here is a proposal that is more sweeping than James's acceptance of a pluralistic multiverse—the very notion of a world that may or may not be commensurable to our conceptual schemes is deemed incoherent and worth abandoning.

A line of criticism that is similar to the pragmatic critique of totality can be found in Jean-François Lyotard's influential account of postmodernity as characterizing an incredulity toward meta-narratives of legitimation. Modernity, according to Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*, presupposed the commitment to several projects of legitimation of a unified body of knowledge embodied in the modern university. Regardless of whether the narratives were *practical*, culminating in the development and actualization of freedom and emancipation, or theoretical, involving the speculative totalization of knowledge, it is clear that Hegel is implicated in both of modernity's major meta-narratives:

> Philosophy must restore unity to learning, which has been scattered into separate sciences in laboratories and in pre-university education; it can only achieve this in a language game that links the sciences together as moments in the becoming of spirit, in other words, which links them in a rational narration, or rather meta-narration. Hegel's *Encyclopedia* (1817–1827) attempts to realize this project of totalization, which was already present in Fichte and Schelling in the form of the idea of the System.[132]

Postmodernity is characterized by Lyotard as the victory of the various processes of delegitimation that these meta-narratives have undergone, and the loss of any romantic nostalgia for lost narratives. In other words, postmodernity can be characterized by the fact that the "grand narrative has lost its credibility."[133] The postmodern university can subsist without any unifying or totalizing narrative, much in the way that James suggested: as a piecemeal heap of diverse knowledge-games without any underlying legitimating principle. While Lyotard's task is primarily descriptive, regarding what he deems to be irreversible historical trends, it is clear that he does not believe in the viability or legitimacy of any return to the holistic organizing principles that animated the earlier goals of modernity.

Lyotard's account closely resembles a historical trend that can be found in the twentieth-century investigation of the history of science in regards to the notion of the *unity of knowledge* and the *unity of the sciences*. If the world is one coherent whole that hangs together in some rational manner, there are reasons to believe that the various sciences and knowledges that cut up the world into specialized disciplines and regional ontologies can be gathered together into a coherent, consistent, and unified whole of the totality of human knowledge. This is akin to the aspirations of Hegel's encyclopedic

method. In the beginning of the twentieth century, moreover, there were several loosely connected optimistic attempts to pursue a program of unification for the most general and foundational axioms of the sciences, often through a process of reducing them to their grounds in the foundations of physics and the foundations of mathematics, and finally upon their logical grounds. Such was the ambition of the so-called "Hilbert-program" of Axiomatic thought, which sought an architectonic relation between the fundamental axioms of mathematics and the rest of the sciences: "These axioms form a layer of axioms which lies deeper than the axiom-layer given by the recently-mentioned fundamental theorems of the individual field of knowledge."[134] The goal of the axiomatic method is therefore to clarify and unify the foundations of all human knowledge by demonstrating the dependence of individual axioms of sciences upon deeper layers, all the way to the claim that "anything at all that can be the object of scientific thought becomes dependent on the axiomatic method, and thereby indirectly on mathematics, as soon as it is ripe for the formation of a theory."[135]

In a similar manner, the scientific and anti-metaphysical spirit of the Vienna circle sought to unify all of human knowledge by means of an elucidation of its logical foundations and an elimination of that which was metaphysical and pseudoscientific within human knowledge. In the Vienna Circle's programmatic statement *The Scientific Conception of the World* of 1929 (signed by Hans Hahn, Otto Neurath, and Rudolph Carnap), this aim of scientific *unification* is made explicit: "The scientific conception of the world is characterized not so much by theses of its own, but rather by its basic attitude, its point of view and direction of research. The goal ahead is *unified science*. The endeavor is to link and harmonize the achievements of individual investigators in their various fields of science."[136] Despite the fact that it cannot be characterized by specific theses, logical positivism does nonetheless seem to presuppose the commensurability between scientific research and the intelligibility of the world, stating unequivocally that "everything is accessible to man"[137] and that "the scientific world-conception knows *no unsolvable riddle*."[138] This optimistic attitude toward the unification and harmonization of the sciences may have seemed possible in the first decades of the twentieth century, but its dream was steadily eroded throughout the second half of the twentieth century, giving way to something much closer to the pluralism of James and Rorty and legitimation incredulity described by Lyotard.

The aspirations of the Hilbert-program are often thought to have foundered on Gödel's so-called incompleteness theorems, in which he demonstrated that any formal system of the Russel-Whitehead kind, and thus the dream of a systematic foundation for arithmetic, cannot be simultaneously coherent and complete.[139] Totalization is thereby shown to be impossible, since it would require the simultaneous coherence and completeness among its deepest

axioms. However, the more general project of a unity of science grounded in some versions of the Vienna Circle's logical positivism[140] did not receive such a direct and decisive blow, but was slowly eroded as philosophers and historians of science came to understand that the multiplicity of ways of doing science were not reducible to the project of logical foundationalism. Nor was the dream of reduction into deeper layers and foundations to be met with success, especially as one came to realize that the models of cognition offered by logic, mathematics, and physics did not easily translate to an appreciation of the ways in which biology, the life sciences, and the social sciences operate more generally. By the late twentieth century we find several historically sensitive historians of sciences rethinking the notion of the unity of science. Nancy Cartwright, in *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science*, shows persuasively that the standard model of the unity of science involved an untenable belief in the grounding of higher, more complex sciences on the more fundamental domains upon which they depended.[141] This project presupposed the reduction of more complex sciences upon domains characterized by physics and mathematics; i.e., the view that the human sciences such as psychology, sociology, and economics find their grounds in biology, which in turn is grounded in chemistry, which is grounded in physics, which is dependent on mathematics. Historians of science have largely come to realize that this view is based upon *scientism*, and not upon an actually empirically and historically sensitive model of how the sciences operate. John Dupré, in a similar critique of reductionism and physicalism in his *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science*,[142] goes on to argue that the disunity found among the sciences is really an attestation of an ontological or metaphysical disunity that is present in nature itself, since "the conception of an ordered nature and a unified science belong naturally together."[143] Concluding in a manner reminiscent of James, he claims that the sciences cannot be unified because the world itself involves a plurality of ways of existing, and this ontological pluralism is reflected back in the multiplicity of ways of knowing involved in particular scientific disciplines.

Finally, there is one last strand of criticism of the holistic notion of world that is operative in contemporary Continental philosophy, one that is particularly important for my purposes since it begins from the Heideggerian position of a closure or completion of metaphysics. This strand, which I would generally describe as "left-Heideggerian," includes the thinking of world and sense found in the deconstructive work of Jean-Luc Nancy and Jacques Derrida.[144] Insofar as these thinkers tend to follow Heidegger in the identification of the world and the domain of sense and meaningfulness, and to understand metaphysical thinking as totalizing this domain of sense, these thinkers seek to understand the disintegration of meaningful relations in

post-metaphysical thinking as signifying a disintegration of the world itself. This thinking becomes, ultimately, a thinking of the *end* of the world, where the concept of world is now understood as the guarantor of a holistic regime of sense and meaningfulness. One could take Jean-Luc Nancy's statement as the axiomatic premise upon which his thinking of world is built: "There is no longer any world: no longer a *mundus*, a *cosmos*, a composed and complete order (from) within which one might find a place, a dwelling, and the elements of an orientation."[145] In an epoch where the world as a totality of sense no longer makes any sense, in the epoch of the end of the world understood in that manner, there is only fragmentation and a plurality of worlds: "The world is always a plurality of worlds: a constellation whose com-possibility is identical with its fragmentation, the compactness of a powder of absolute fragments."[146] A very similar identification of world with sense or meaning, as well as a denial that such a meaning or sense can become an organized whole, is found throughout Derrida's deconstructive project. Derrida suggests that the semantic singularity and unity of the word "world" is really a way of masking our panic and anxiety "of the fact that *there is not the world*, that nothing is less certain than the world itself, that there is perhaps no longer a world and no doubt there never was one as totality of anything at all, habitable and co-habitable world."[147] Like Nancy, Derrida sees the absence of "the world" understood as a harmonious organized whole as the correlative of a fragmentation of sense and meaning, and argues that the absence of a common world in which we all live "depends first on the absence without recourse of any world, i.e., of any common meaning of the word 'world,' in sum of any common meaning at all."[148]

Derrida seems to be following Heidegger's account of death as something non-relational that radically individuates Dasein—something that cannot be shared with any other Dasein. Death thereby can be seen as the possible collapse of the world of sense, since Heidegger defines it "*as the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all*,"[149] and not simply the possibility of the end of one's own particular existence within the world. Derrida follows Heidegger's lead here, through an interpretation of a Celan poem, in suggesting that the end of the individual's life, as its being-toward-death, puts the individual face-to-face with the end of the world as such: "Individual death I've often said was each time *the* end of *the* world, *the* end, the whole end of the world (*Die Welt is fort*), not a particular end of this or that world . . . but the end of the world in general, the absolute end of the world . . . of any possible world, or of what is supposed to make the world a cosmos, an arrangement, an order."[150] However, neither in Derrida nor in Heidegger do we get a sustained line of argumentation regarding how one gets from the possibility of the impossibility of one's *own existence* to the possibility of the impossibility of *any existence at all*. That is, what is missing is an argument regarding

how one moves from the end of the world of *solum ipse* to the end of the world in toto, unless, of course, there is a surreptitious solipsistic identification of *my* world with *the* world as such and as a whole.

Furthermore, Derrida seems to also be appropriating and radicalizing Husserl's problem of sharing a world in common with other egos in his account of the problem of intersubjectivity in the fifth of the *Cartesian Meditations*.[151] However, Derrida clearly does not find Husserl's solution of an intersubjective community of monads satisfying, preferring instead to subscribe to a fictional (and Nietzschean) interpretation of the Kantian regulative model of the "as if," in that "it seems to be *as if* we were behaving *as if* we were inhabiting the same world and speaking of the same thing and speaking the same language, when in fact we well know—at the point where the phantasm precisely comes up against its limit—that this is not true at all."[152] While we may speak *as if* we required a world in common, *as if* we inhabited one and the same world, *as if* the world itself made sense, Derrida suggests that we no longer can believe in such a shared horizon of experience. And death, as that which ultimately individuates the human in her singular solitude, is the limit of the end of the world as the end of all sense and meaning. To some extent, Derrida makes of the shared world an epistemological problem, stating that such a shared horizon cannot be demonstrated in the manner that Husserl attempted, or in any manner at all: "One can always question the supposed unity or identity of the world, not only between animal and human, but already from one living being to another. No one will ever be able to demonstrate, what is called *demonstrate* in all rigor, that two human beings, you and I for example, inhabit the same world, that the world is one and the same thing for both of us."[153] What Derrida means by demonstration here is left unclarified. It is of course the case that no deductive mathematical proof will suffice to demonstrate a shared and unified world, but one may wonder what it would mean to state unequivocally that no possible demonstration whatsoever can ever be given. We can, with Hegel, turn around and mistrust this very mistrust, and wonder what it would entail to "demonstrate in all rigor" that such a demonstration can never be given, that it is inherently *indemonstrable*.[154]

What I want to suggest here is that none of the lines of argumentation I have outlined above offer a rigorous and definitive demonstration that the concept of world is either incoherent or contradictory.[155] Rather, the various ways in which the holistic aspirations of philosophy have been criticized and undermined together exemplify a certain zeitgeist, a certain spirit of the times, that leads to a general "incredulity," to use Lyotard's term. But this general sense of the times, this generalized incredulity, can create the illusion that the view of philosophy as oriented toward an organized, intelligible, and unified

whole has been *refuted* once and for all. I do not think that this the case, nor has anyone given a full account of what such a refutation would actually entail. It has repeatedly been shown, of course, that oversimplified desires for coherence and totality that we demand of the world often express more about our own desires for coherence and meaning than they do about how the world "really is," whatever that might mean. Along with Nietzsche, we may say that the holistic aspirations of philosophy really tell us more about our expectations regarding the intelligibility of the world and our desire to make it habitable for human thought and action than they do about the world itself. The world repeatedly frustrates our desires to render it stable, coherent, intelligible, meaningful, and unified. But a dialectical understanding of the history of philosophy, as is offered by Hegel, would entail an account of how we respond to such frustrations by reorganizing our ways of orienting toward the whole in order to render them more successful. Has such a process reached its final exhaustion? Have all permutations of the metaphysical desire been attempted and refuted? In Heidegger's terms, has metaphysics reached its completion and exhaustion of its possibilities? This is the argument that is necessary in order to maintain that philosophy as an orientation toward the whole is at an end. In the following section, which will serve as a conclusion to this book, I will argue that no such definitive argument is found in Heidegger, and that perhaps we ought to take a step back, so to speak, from his "step back" from metaphysics.

NOTES

1. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 2.

2. Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 96.

3. The question of how to characterize "modernity" is, of course, the subject of great controversy. The literature on the topic is vast, but the following texts may be fruitfully consulted: Jacob Klein, "The World of Physics and the 'Natural' World," in *Lectures and Essays* (Annapolis: St. John's College Press, 1985), 1–34; Alexandre Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1957); Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, translated by David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970); Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, translated by Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985); Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, translated by Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987); Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 248–325; Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis:*

The Hidden Agenda of Modernity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007); Michael Allen Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); and Richard Kennington, *On Modern Origins: Essays in Early Modern Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004).

4. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by Harvey Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 101.

5. Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, edited by Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 33.

6. René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking the Truth in the Science*s, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume I*, translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 142–43.

7. This is the suggestion of Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" in *What Is Political Philosophy? And Other Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 47.

8. Thomas Hobbes, "Six Lessons to the Professors of the Mathematics," in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, Volume VII (London: John Bohn, 1745), 184.

9. Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis: An Essay on the History of the Idea of Nature*, translated by Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). Hereafter cited as *Veil of Isis*.

10. Hadot, *Veil of Isis*, 92.

11. Francis Bacon, *The Wisdom of the Ancients*, in *The Works of Francis Bacon: Volume I* (Philadelphia: Parry & McMillan, 1855), 305–9.

12. Karl Marx, "Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature," in Marx and Engels, *Collected Works: Volume I* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 31.

13. Hadot, *Veil of Isis*, 92.

14. Hadot, *Veil of Isis*, 96.

15. Hadot, *Veil of Isis*, 96.

16. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy: The Lectures of 1825–1826, Vol. III*, translated by R. F. Brown and J. M. Steward (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 132.

17. Hegel, AL, 54; VA, 81.

18. Hegel, AL, 54; VA, 81.

19. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 109; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 97–98.

20. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in BW, 341; "Die Frage nach der Technik," in VA, 36. In a curious formulation in a late seminar, Heidegger puts it in the following manner: "Positionality is, as it were, the photographic negative of enowning." Heidegger, FS, 60; VS, 140.

21. Hegel, SL, 736; WL II, 440.

22. Hegel, SL, 743; WL II, 448.

23. Hegel, SL, 745; WL II, 450.

24. Hegel, SL, 745; WL II, 451.

25. Hegel, SL, 746; WL II, 452.
26. Hegel, SL, 747; WL II, 453.
27. Hegel, SL, 747; WL II, 453.
28. Hegel, SL, 750; WL II, 457.
29. Hegel, SL, 766; WL II, 476.
30. Hegel, SL, 766–67; WL II, 476–77.
31. Hegel, PM, 10; PG, 20.
32. Hegel, PM, 18; PG, 29.
33. Hegel, PM, 22; PG, 34.
34. Hegel, PM, 293; PG, 367.
35. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's* Phenomenology*: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 221.
36. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's* Phenomenology*: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 221.
37. Hegel, AL, 30–31; VA, 50–51.
38. Hegel, AL, 31; VA, 51.
39. Hegel, AL, 31; VA, 51.
40. Hegel, AL, 31; VA, 51.
41. Hegel, AL, 2; VA, 14.
42. Heinrich Heine, *Confessions*, in *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany and Other Writings*, translated by Howard Pollack-Milgate (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 206.
43. Hegel, AL, 38; VA, 60.
44. Hegel, AL, 38; VA, 60.
45. Hegel, SL, 603; WL II, 277.
46. Heidegger, CPC, 7; FG, 11.
47. Heidegger, BT, 58; SZ, 34.
48. Heidegger, QCtT, 34; FD, 49.
49. Kant, CPR, 151; KrV, B130.
50. Hegel, PhS, 58; PhG, 82.
51. Heidegger, BF, 5; BFV, 5.
52. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 153; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 155–56.
53. Heidegger, QCtT, 34; FD, 49.
54. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 109; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 97.
55. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 109; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 98.
56. Hadot, *Veil of Isis*, 98.
57. Heidegger, BF, 9; BFV, 9.
58. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.
59. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.
60. Heidegger, "Anaximander's Saying," in OBT, 247; "Der Spruch des Anaximander," in HW, 328.

61. Heidegger, "poetically man dwells" in PLT, 218; "dichterisch wohnet der Mensch" in VA, 196–97.

62. Cf. W. J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), 570–72; Julian Young, *Heidegger's Later Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 91–121; Andrew J. Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015).

63. Heidegger, BF, 18; BFV, 19.

64. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.

65. Heidegger, BF, 16; BFV, 17.

66. Andrew J. Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015).

67. Heidegger, BF, 16; BFV, 17.

68. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 149; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 151.

69. Heidegger, BF, 16; BFV, 17.

70. Heidegger, BF, 46; BFV, 47.

71. Heidegger, BF, 71; BFV, 75.

72. Heidegger, BF, 71; BFV, 75.

73. Heidegger, CPC, 103; FG, 157.

74. G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, translated by T. M. Knox and A. V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 79. Italics mine.

75. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in BW, 243; "Brief über den Humanismus," in WM, 339.

76. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in BW, 244; "Brief über den Humanismus," in WM, 341.

77. Hegel, EL, 60; EnL, 84.

78. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Art: The Hotho Transcript of the 1823 Berlin Lectures*, edited and translated by Robert F. Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2014), 349.

79. For an elaboration of the concept of reconciliation, especially in its social and political dimensions, see Michael O. Hardimon, *Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

80. Hegel, AL, 97; VA, 134.

81. Hegel, AL, 97; VA, 134.

82. Hegel, AL, 98–99; VA, 136.

83. Hegel, AL, 99; VA, 137.

84. Hegel, AL, 100; VA, 138.

85. Hegel, AL, 54–55; VA, 81.

86. Hegel, AL, 55; VA, 81–82.

87. Hegel, SL, 826; WL II, 511.

88. Hegel, PhS, 490; PhG, 587.

89. Heidegger, BT, 232; SZ, 187.

90. Heidegger, BT, 233; SZ, 188. On the concept of the uncanny and its significance for interpreting Heidegger, see Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

91. Heidegger, BT, 233; SZ, 189.

92. Heidegger, BT, 393; SZ, 343.

93. Heidegger, BT, 393; SZ, 343.

94. Novalis, *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopedia: Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, translated by David W. Wood (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 155.

95. Heidegger, FCM, 5; GM, 8.

96. Heidegger, FCM, 5–6; GM, 8.

97. Heidegger, FCM, 6; GM, 9.

98. Heidegger, PR, 110; SG, 165.

99. Heidegger, PR, 111; SG, 166.

100. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 149; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 151.

101. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 150; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 152.

102. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 150; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 152.

103. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 150; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 152.

104. Heidegger, BF, 18; BFV, 19.

105. Hegel, PhS, 49; PhG, 71: "*One* bare assurance is worth just as much as another."

106. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.

107. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.

108. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.

109. Heidegger, BF, 20; BFV, 21.

110. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 151; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 153.

111. Heidegger, BF, 20; BFV, 21.

112. Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in PLT, 151; "Bauen Wohnen Denken," in VA, 153.

113. Hegel, EL, 43; EnL, 60.

114. Hegel, EL, 33; EnL, 47.

115. Hegel, EL, 28; EnL, 41.

116. Hegel, EL, 28; EnL, 41.

117. Hegel, PN, 6; NP, 15.

118. Hegel, PhS 493; PhG 591.

119. Cf. Klaus Hartmann, "Hegel: a Non-metaphysical View," in *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Alasdair MacIntyre, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

120. Wilfrid Sellars, "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man," in *Science, Perception and Reality* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1963), 1.

121. Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense," in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings,* translated by Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 146.

122. On Nietzsche's relationship to Kant, see R. Kevin Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques: The Kantian Foundations of His Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003). On the ways in which Nietzsche transforms this Kantian dichotomy by means of a pre-Socratic understanding of Parmenidean being and Heraclitean becoming, see Michael Steven Green, *Nietzsche and the Transcendental Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002).

123. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, translated by Kate Sturge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 20–21.

124. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 12.

125. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (London: Routledge, 1945).

126. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 18.

127. Theodor Adorno, "The Actuality of Philosophy," *Telos*, no. 31 (March 20, 1977): 120.

128. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, translated by E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), 50.

129. William James, *A Pluralistic Universe: Herbert Lectures at Manchester College on the Present Situation in Philosophy* (Rockville: Arc Manor, 2008).

130. William James, *A Pluralistic Universe: Herbert Lectures at Manchester College on the Present Situation in Philosophy* (Rockville: Arc Manor, 2008), 129.

131. Richard Rorty, "The World Well Lost," *Journal of Philosophy* 60, no. 19 (1972): 664.

132. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 33–34.

133. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 37.

134. David Hilbert, "Axiomatic Thought," in *From Kant to Hilbert: A Source Book in the Foundations of Mathematics: Volume II*, edited by William Ewald (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1109.

135. David Hilbert, "Axiomatic Thought," in *From Kant to Hilbert: A Source Book in the Foundations of Mathematics: Volume II*, edited by William Ewald (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1115.

136. Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, and Rudolf Carnap, "The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle," in Otto Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1973), 305–6.

137. Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, and Rudolf Carnap, "The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle," in Otto Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1973), 306.

138. Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn, and Rudolf Carnap, "The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle," in Otto Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1973), 306.

139. Kurt Gödel, "On Formally Undecidable Propositions of *Principia Mathematica* and Related Systems I," in Kurt Gödel, *Collected Works: Volume I, Publications 1929–1936*, edited by Solomon Feferman et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 145–95. See also the lucid summary offered in Ernest Nagel and James R. Newman, *Gödel's Proof* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

140. I have included the caveat "some versions" considering the fact that, as Nancy Cartwright convincingly argues in *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), the standard picture of the unity of science in the Vienna Circle is not held by all of its members. Cartwright shows how Neurath in particular seemed to be extremely sensitive to the multiplicity and plurality that results from true empiricism.

141. Nancy Cartwright, *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 7–19.

142. John Dupré, *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

143. John Dupré, *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 221. See also Ian Hacking, "The Disunities of the Sciences," in *The Disunity of Science: Boundaries, Contexts, and Power,* edited by Peter Galison and David J. Stump (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 37–74.

144. To some extent, we could include within "left-Heideggerianism" works such as Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, translated by Chris Turner (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); and Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). There are several books on the concept of world that continue along these theoretical parameters, highly influenced by Derrida or Nancy, including Michael Naas, *The End of the World and Other Teachable Moments* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), Sean Gaston, *The Concept of World from Kant to Derrida* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013); and Kas Saghafi, *The World after the End of the World: A Spectro-Poetics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2021).

145. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Sense of the World*, translated by Jeffrey S. Librett (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 4.

146. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Sense of the World*, translated by Jeffrey S. Librett (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 155.

147. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 266.

148. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 266.

149. Heidegger, BT, 307; SZ, 262.

150. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 259–60.

151. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, translated by Dorian Cairns (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 89–157.

152. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 268.

153. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 265.

154. The closest one has come to this, of course, would be Gödel's results in his so-called incompleteness theorems. However, these apply explicitly to the "*Principia Mathematica* and Related Systems," and it would require great conceptual work to show that all of our concepts of the "world" would fall under such "related systems." Short of that effort, it would be inappropriate to expand its results beyond domains to which it is applicable.

155. One recent attempt to offer a more sustained line of argumentation, that draws to some extent on the anti-metaphysical arguments above, can be found in Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist*, translated by Gregory S. Moss (Malden: Polity Press, 2015). However, in my estimation the book seems to begin with the premise that the world does not exist, a premise that Gabriel calls a "principle," and then unfold the implications of this nonexistence for a new kind of realism. It is not, however, a sustained argument for the principle itself.

Conclusion

The Step Back from the Step Back

In the previous chapter, I have outlined some of the kinds of arguments that have generally led to the incredulity toward the metaphysical project of a knowledgeable relationship to the world as a whole, and thus toward the classical holistic aspirations of philosophy found in Hegel and in the early Heidegger. I also suggested, in passing, that anything resembling a definitive argument concerning the impossibility of such a holistic conception of the world is missing from the authors who embrace it. Heidegger comes closest to offering such an argument, I believe, in his account of the completion (*Vollendung*) of metaphysics. If such an argument is actually deemed decisive, then any attempt to retrieve metaphysics or to continue its aspirations is thereby doomed to failure. It is certainly true that philosophers can continue arguing about metaphysical puzzles in scholarly publications and setting up new metaphysical principles that structure all of reality, but such enterprises will be deemed nostalgic or anachronistic. They will no longer have the determinative force that previous metaphysical principles had in grounding an age and founding the truth of beings for that historical epoch. It is therefore a matter of great importance to understand upon what kind of an argumentation rests the claim regarding the end of philosophy and the completion of metaphysics, and what kind of force such an argument can have. The very possibility of any modified form of the Hegelian project would depend on the success of such arguments.

One historical clue regarding the non-dispositive character of the arguments against the possibility of metaphysics is the strange resurgence it has made in various traditions despite these sustained critiques. One therefore finds, after almost half a century of criticisms of the metaphysical tendency of philosophy, returns to traditional metaphysical questions in both the so-called analytic and continental traditions of philosophy. Within the analytic and Anglo-American tradition, despite the arguments of logical positivists, ordinary language philosophers, Wittgensteinians, and others, the work of Saul Kripke and David Lewis rehabilitated more robust metaphysical questions

in the last decades of the twentieth century. Curiously, the continental tradition of primarily French and German philosophers has undergone a parallel development at almost the same time. After the dominance of those following Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the post-phenomenological critiques of the metaphysical ambitions of philosophy, in recent times there has been considerable dissatisfaction with this consensus, and thinkers as diverse as Gilles Deleuze and Alain Badiou have once again placed robust metaphysical questions at the heart of their philosophical projects. Members of a younger generation, including Quentin Meillassoux in France and Markus Gabriel in Germany, have shown deep dissatisfaction with the arguments against metaphysical concerns and opened the way for a return to metaphysics and ontology. While these historical facts are in no way proofs of the viability of the metaphysical ambitions of philosophy, they suggest something closer to a Hegelian historical dialectic that swings between the extremes of critique and resurgence of metaphysics, rather than a linear developmental history. If such a historical clue is not enough to convince us of the renewed possibilities latent within metaphysics, we must turn to Heidegger's own sustained arguments regarding the completion and end of metaphysics in order to see whether or not they can be deemed conclusive and dispositive.

Upon what basis, then, rest Heidegger's claims regarding the end of philosophy and the completion of metaphysics? We have seen, previously, that the later Heidegger understands the relationship between philosophy and metaphysics through three interrelated claims: (1) "Philosophy is metaphysics,"[1] (2) "Metaphysics thinks beings as a whole,"[2] and (3) "the Being of beings has shown itself as the ground."[3] Philosophy is metaphysics in that it thinks beings as a whole, and thus the world, by offering a ground that determines the truth of the beings within that world, a ground that renders the beings existing therein intelligible. Such a project, he argues, is at a historical end because metaphysics is in some way completed: "The end of philosophy means the completion of metaphysics [*die Vollendung der Metaphysik*]."[4] No new ground will be offered by means of which we will interpret the entirety of what is, the beingness of beings. This completion, however, is neither understood as the perfection of metaphysics, in the sense of a full actualization of its original potentiality, nor as a mere cessation in the sense that no one can any longer produce metaphysical theses. Rather, completions means a historical gathering of all the metaphysical possibilities of philosophy: "The end of philosophy is the place, that place in which the whole of philosophy's history is gathered in its uttermost possibility."[5] This gathering of its possibilities is also understood as the exhaustion of new determinative or essential possibilities: "It means the historical moment in which the essential possibilities of metaphysics are exhausted [*erschöpft sind*]."[6] It is an end or a

completion in the double sense of gathering all possibilities, and of exhausting any new metaphysical possibilities.

For this gathering of essential possibilities and its exhaustion to take place, two thinkers are of utmost importance for Heidegger: Hegel and Nietzsche. While both remain within the modern trajectory of a metaphysics of subjectivity, their thinking performs important and distinct tasks in such a completion. Hegel's totalizing of the history of philosophy into a series of steps toward absolute knowledge is an important part of what it means to historically gather the history of philosophy as a whole into its uttermost possibility, and therefore Hegel is credited by Heidegger with initiating this process of completion: "The completion of metaphysics begins with Hegel's metaphysics of absolute knowledge."[7] However, such a beginning of the process of completion is not the completion itself. For that, one must first have a *conscious reversal* of the metaphysical project.[8] In Nietzsche's understanding of metaphysics as Platonism, and in his project of overcoming and reversing Platonism, we arrive at the genuine completion: "With Nietzsche's metaphysics, philosophy is completed."[9] In the philosophy of the "will to will" and the transformation of the world into that which can be manipulated by our will, metaphysics enters into its final stage. Technology is Heidegger's name for the historical manifestation of Nietzsche's will to power. Technology can therefore be directly identified with the completion of metaphysics: "The name 'technology' is understood here in such an essential way that its meaning coincides with the term 'completed metaphysics.'"[10]

The argument for the completion of metaphysics and the exhaustion of its possibilities is therefore predicated on two significantly contestable set of claims. The first is that it relies on Heidegger's controversial interpretation of Nietzsche as the last metaphysician of the will to power, a reading highly dependent on usage of Nietzsche's writings contained in his unpublished notebooks and collected posthumously as *The Will to Power*. The second is the link Heidegger makes between Nietzsche's philosophy of the will to power and the technological age in which we live. Heidegger must make a direct connection between a philosophical grounding of all that is and a historical age: "Completed metaphysics, which is the ground for the planetary manner of thinking, gives the scaffolding for an order of the earth which will supposedly last for a long time. The order no longer needs philosophy because philosophy is already its foundation."[11] Philosophy as metaphysics is thus understood to be the ground for our relationship to what exists, and the foundation for the thinking of being in our present age. This connection between an interpretation of metaphysics and what is supposedly a historical account of our contemporary relationship to beings puts Heidegger's historical thinking under great stress. That is, in order to think the completion

of the history of metaphysics, one must place oneself above or outside the history of metaphysics. And insofar as history is, for Heidegger, essentially the history of being as metaphysics, this requires a supra-historical thinking that Heidegger elsewhere denies. In one of his earliest formulations of the history of being, he is keenly aware of such a difficulty: "Of course, the question of whether and how all the essential possibilities of metaphysics can be surveyed at once has yet to be decided. Might not the future still be open to metaphysical possibilities of which we suspect nothing? Surely, we do not stand 'above' history, least of all 'above' the history of metaphysics, if it is really the essential ground of all history."[12] Heidegger must be thinking here of Hegel, for whom a perusal of all the historical manifestations of philosophy, and a teleological organization of their history by means of the actualization of the idea, requires a vantage point outside the merely historical standpoint. Since Heidegger denies such an arrogance to philosophy, he has the difficulty of explaining the standpoint from which the completion of metaphysics and its exhaustion can be surveyed.

This problem has led thinkers such as Jacques Derrida, who in many respects follows Heidegger in the project of deconstructing metaphysical thought, to question the standpoint from which the completion of metaphysics can be determined. Derrida therefore continues to think at the site of what he calls the "closure (*clôture*)" of metaphysics, while denying access to anything outside or beyond it: "This would perhaps mean that one does not leave the epoch whose closure one can outline. The movements of belonging or not belonging to the epoch are too subtle, the illusions in that regard are too easy, for us to make a definite judgment."[13] Derrida is correct to put the question in terms of judgment, for that is ultimately the way that Heidegger seems to get around the problem. If the claim regarding the closure and completion of metaphysics has to be a historical claim made from within history and without recourse to the supra-historical standpoint outside of the history of metaphysics, Heidegger acknowledges in some texts that it is ultimately a historical *decision*: "The statement concerning the end of metaphysics is of course a historical decision [*geschichtliche Entscheidung*]."[14] That is not to suggest that it is a completely arbitrary or willful decision based on the whims of individual thinkers, since, as we have seen, Heidegger gives several arguments regarding how we ought to think and characterize such a completion. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that ultimately the claim regarding the completion of metaphysics is better described in terms of "historical decision" rather than some form of irrefutable demonstration. Perhaps a better way of putting it, beyond the dichotomy between demonstration and decision, is Reiner Schürmann's language of hypothesis: "This end of epochal history is the starting point for everything Heidegger has to say about both thinking and acting. One may call it his *hypothesis of closure*."[15]

However, while Heidegger will acknowledge, at certain moments, the perilous ground upon which the hypothesis of the completion of metaphysics rests, at other times he will carelessly make bold historical statements bordering on philosophical prophesy, statements such as the following: "Experienced in virtue of the dawning of the origin, metaphysics is, however, at the same time past in the sense that it has entered its ending. The ending lasts longer than the previous history of metaphysics."[16] Presumably this means that while we have had to endure metaphysics for over two thousand years, the dominance of planetary technology and the completion of metaphysics will last at least another two thousand. All the caveats regarding the historical standpoint of decision from which such statements are made are gone whenever Heidegger begins to describe the effects of the completion of metaphysics as technology, and the language of necessity obfuscates matters further: "The decline of the truth of beings occurs necessarily, and indeed as the completion of metaphysics. The decline occurs through the collapse of the world characterized by metaphysics, and at the same time through the desolation of the earth stemming from metaphysics. . . . The decline has already taken place. The consequences of this occurrence are the events of world history in this century."[17] One can therefore say that there is a certain slippage that happens between moments where Heidegger is careful regarding the hypothesis or decision regarding completion, and moments where he begins to prophesize indiscriminately regarding current and future historical events as necessarily grounded upon the completion of metaphysics.

A version of this slippage can be seen even in thinkers who follow Heidegger but are more careful regarding the hypothesis of closure. Such is even the case for Derrida, who, as we saw in the previous section, questions the unity, coherence, and shareability of a world as a whole, the same world that Heidegger described as a fundamental concept of metaphysics. This is a slippage that is, like Heidegger's, paradigmatic of most critiques of totality. This slippage involves moving between careful and guarded deconstructive statements, on the one hand, and dogmatic assertions on the other. That is, at times Derrida suggests that we do not have a demonstration of the unity and identity of world, while maintaining that we may need useful regulative notions of such a unity: "There really must be a certain presumed, anticipated unity of the world even in order discursively to sustain with it multiplicity, untranslatable and un-gatherable, the dissemination of possible worlds."[18] In these more careful and deconstructive moments, Derrida is guarded in ascribing a deep ambiguity and uncertainty in regards to whether or not there actually is a world as a unified and shared horizon, putting it in the following fallible manner: "Perhaps there is no world. Not yet and perhaps not since ever and perhaps not ever. I do not say this to roil you up or depress you, but because it is what I must think and say according to the most implacable

necessity."[19] I take it that this implacable necessity involves the rigor of deconstructive reading, which is included in the cautious and hesitant "perhaps" that is repeated three times in these few lines. However, at other times he puts the same claim as a rhetorical question or a challenge to those who may still believe in the horizon of a shared world: "For example the word 'world' as totality of what is, etc. That no one has ever come across, right? Have you ever come across the world as such?"[20] But then in the same pages we find more assured claims that "we well know"[21] that such a world is only projected and unreal, and that its existence can never be demonstrated. Without warning or caveat, the cautious statements embedded in epistemological concerns become certainties, and we find dogmatic claims that "no doubt there never was one as totality of anything at all"[22] and assurances regarding "the undeniable fact that there is no world."[23]

What I am suggesting is that even though arguments regarding the completion of metaphysics present themselves as humble, provisional, and modest attempts to twist free from metaphysical thinking, they often betray a certain slippage in their presentation regarding the closure of metaphysics and the exhaustion of its possibilities. This slippage makes such humble arguments turn into arrogant assurances regarding the impossibility of new metaphysical principles and the putative certainty regarding the unfeasibility of any holistic aspirations of philosophy. As we have seen, Heidegger distances himself from philosophy as metaphysics by claiming that "We have left the arrogance of everything unconditional behind us."[24] This arrogance is directly related to the Hegelian *Aufhebung* of the possibilities of philosophy, and its remedy is called the "step back" from metaphysics: "For us, the character of the conversation with the history of thinking is no longer elevation (*Aufhebung*), but the step back [*der Schritt zurück*]. . . . The step back points to the realm which until now has been skipped over, and from which the essence of truth becomes first of all worthy of thought."[25] This step back involves a risk and a gamble, namely, a decision or hypothesis regarding the completion of metaphysics. Moreover, insofar as it interprets metaphysics as skipping over a deeper layer of truth and substituting principles and foundations for what is actually an *Abgrund* that withdraws from intelligibility, the step back from metaphysics actually presupposes that being itself is not fully determined by the regime of intelligibility. It therefore presupposes, so to speak, that at its ground, being is not fully intelligible. This claim, I would argue, is in the end just as arrogant as the opposing claim that being is fully determinate and intelligible. Its arrogance resides in the assurance with which one may claim insight into the intelligibility or lack thereof of being itself.

What I am proposing, by way of conclusion, is a step back from this step back, analogous to Hegel's claims against skepticism regarding science that arises out of fear from error: "it is hard to see why we should not turn round

and mistrust this very mistrust."[26] However, a deeper problem arises here regarding what position that would place us in relation to metaphysics itself. If we are to take a step back from the step back, do we simply return to the hopes and aspirations of metaphysical principles, now searching for a new foundation that would determine the totality of what exists and organize it into a coherent whole? Do we naively push through Kantian critical restrictions and return to a straightforward belief in the power of thought to capture the totality of what is? Are we not stuck, here, between the arrogance of the unconditional (Hegelian philosophy), and an arrogance regarding insight into the impossibility of metaphysically grounding the whole by means of a principle of intelligibility (Heidegger's thinking)? There is little question, I think, as to the veracity of Heidegger's complaint regarding Hegelian arrogance, namely, that it believes itself to have achieved, by means of the idea, a certain kind of insight into the process by means of which all intelligibility takes place within the world. The step back from the step back, therefore, cannot simply be a return to that assurance, but it must allow for a kind of openness toward metaphysics that is not possible within the parameters of the arguments regarding the closure and completion of metaphysics. Perhaps a brief characterization of the young Hegel's holism, prior to his later encyclopedic self-confidence in Berlin, may help us see what such an openness may look like.

Whereas the younger Hegel of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* already presupposes the fact that "the True is actual only as system,"[27] it is important to note the way in which the system of science is built up from the previous historical configurations that have now become the *doxa*, and therefore the substance, within which individuals dwell. Spirit becomes science and system only insofar as it converts that which is immediate and given into the shape of something that it has built for itself and that it knows as its own: "The Spirit that, so developed, knows itself as Spirit, is Science; Science is its actuality and the realm which it builds for itself in its own element."[28] The previous education of spirit is contained in the education of an individual in a given age, insofar as these previous achievements become the facts, opinions, knowledges, and ideologies one learns in school and in the immediate world around us: "This past existence is the already acquired property of universal Spirit which constitutes the Substance of the individual, and hence appears externally to him as his inorganic nature."[29] By describing these previous achievements of spirit as something that has become the "Substance" of the individual and her "inorganic nature," Hegel is pointing to the fact that in its current form, it is still found by the individual as immediate forms of knowledge, as forms that have only undergone a "first negation."[30] The whole of our relationship to the world, both as theoretical knowledge and practical engagement, is given to us by our historical context and education (in the

broadest possible sense) as something with which we are familiar: "Hence this acquired property still has the same character of uncomprehended immediacy, of passive indifference, as existence itself; . . . it is thus something *familiar*."[31] The holistic aspiration of philosophy in Hegel's sense involves the conversion of this given context, which now has the character of the substance of historical individuals and the familiar "knowings and doings" which now constitute their "inorganic nature" or second nature into something like a coherent whole, a system of science.

The task of the individual thinker is therefore to repeat and retrieve the historical achievements of spirit that have become her substance through a process that Hegel likens to recollection. Each of these achievements have already been converted, by means of a first negation, from mere empirical externality into the element of thought. As he puts it: "All this has already been *implicitly* accomplished; the content is already the actuality reduced to a possibility, its immediacy overcome, and the embodied shape reduced to abbreviated, simple determinations of thought."[32] The individual must go through a process of "explicitation" of what is implicit, reactivating the achievements of spirit by showing, wherever possible, the necessary transitions and interrelations that may have been hidden by the more contingent aspects of their original, historical development. Insofar as this substance has already become the property of spirit, the process is one of recollection, both in terms of remembering and collecting together, while converting it from the familiar and immediate into something self-conscious and for-itself: "It is no longer existence in the form of *being-in-itself* [Ansichseins]—neither still in the original form, nor submerged in existence—but is now the *recollected in-itself* [erinnerte Ansich], ready for conversion into the form of *being-for-self* [Fürsichseins]."[33] This conversion of the first immediacy that has turned the substance of spirit, by means of a first negation, into a moment of thought, requires a second negation of its contingent and immediate existence, showing the necessity and rationality that was lurking behind its historical development.

Within this second-order conversion of the possessions of spirit into a system of science lies the danger of the arrogance of philosophy that Heidegger is so worried about. If we are to rationally reconstruct the achievements of spirit, organizing them into a cosmos or a coherent world, how are we to do so without presupposing or violently imposing the criteria of organization, but rather finding it immanently within its dialectical movement? Must we presuppose that such a historical development already included within it its own rational necessity, and that the idea is the adequate portrayal of such a necessity? Hegel is here a classical thinker, believing that it is the purpose of science and philosophy to identify the necessity that hides behind contingent manifestations. Although he says as much in several places, it is important

to remember that this acknowledgment of necessity hiding behind supposedly contingent events does not erase or undermine contingency completely. His caveat in the second sentence of the following citation must therefore be heeded: "It is quite right that the task of science and, more precisely of philosophy in general, consists in knowing the necessity hidden beneath the semblance of contingency. Yet this should not be so understood as if the contingent pertained merely to our subjective representation and that, therefore, it must be completely set aside in order to arrive at truth."[34] One therefore does not, and cannot, know a priori what and to what extent certain developments ought to be understood as necessary or contingent. We must proceed as if, whenever we are given a certain object for philosophical reflection, there may be hidden behind a "semblance of contingency" a form of necessity we are not yet aware of. This is, in essence, the aspirational aspect of the holism Hegel proposes. This holistic *aspiration* should be sharply distinguished from a holistic *projection* that, in a monstrously rationalistic manner, presupposes a priori that there must be reason and necessity hidden behind each and every contingent thought or action.

Is it possible, finally, to embrace something like the holistic aspirations of philosophy without falling into the arrogance with which Hegel maintains that he has grasped the organizing principle of the whole, namely, the idea? Is it possible to deny to thought full access to such organizing principle, without arrogantly claiming to know, as Heidegger sometimes does, that being itself is, at ground, without why and beyond intelligibility? I think it is, and it would involve something akin to a return to Socratic ignorance regarding knowledge of the whole, while simultaneously maintaining the philosophical necessity of an openness and orientation toward the whole. We saw, in the beginning of this book, that despite his confessions of ignorance and turn away from wisdom regarding nature toward inquiry through discussion, Socrates will at several points affirm that philosophy requires an orientation toward the whole, or at least a reaching out toward it: "For petty speech is of course most opposite to a soul that is always going to reach out for the whole [*psuchē mellouse tou holou*] and for everything divine and human."[35] This attitude of reaching out toward the whole does not presuppose any confidence in our individual or collective ability to fully grasp the whole. We are, after all, finite. But Socratic ignorance does not jettison such an aspiration, declaring it in strictly aspirational terms—the participle of the Greek verb *mello* here indicating an intention, an expectation, or a desire. To remain open toward knowledge of the whole requires just as much vigilance and care regarding the overconfidence that one may have in actually grasp the whole, as regarding the overconfidence that is hidden in seemingly humble claims of ignorance and the impossibility of determinate thought. When Kant claims, for example, that we lack the intellect to attain intuitive knowledge

of life in the manner of a divine intellect, he may present such a limitation in terms of finitude and epistemic humility. However, the flipside of this claim is the assured assertion that we can never adequately know life in the way we know mechanical nature. Kant is fully aware of the mixture between humility and arrogance, between assertions of limitation and boldness, present in such assertions:

> For it is quite certain that we can never adequately come to know the organized beings and their internal possibility in accordance with merely mechanical principles of nature, let alone explain them; and indeed this is so certain that we can boldly say that it would be absurd for humans even to make such an attempt or to hope that there may yet arise a Newton who could make comprehensible even the generation of a blade of grass according to natural laws that no intention has ordered; rather, we must absolutely deny this insight to human beings.[36]

The epistemic humility regarding our knowledge of life quickly turns into a bold certainty making prophetic claims about future. Behind a seemingly humble epistemic stricture there is the confident denial that there will be nothing like a Darwin or modern genetics. It is this same strange mixture of humility and confidence that we find in Heidegger's arguments regarding the completion and overcoming of metaphysics.

The step back from the step back would, therefore, entail a renewed openness toward the whole, but one now tempered by a Socratic ignorance and skepticism regarding our ability to know or grasp the whole. *Perhaps*, on the one hand, Hegel is right that being is itself intelligible, and, if so, we should hope to continuously find necessary structures lurking behind the semblance of contingency. *Perhaps*, on the other hand, Heidegger is right that there is something to being that is radically without why and without ground, something that fundamentally withdraws from the regime of intelligibility and frustrates our metaphysical desires for unconditional knowledge. Knowing which of these options is correct, however, is not something that can be done a priori, prior to the inquiry and the investigation, and *perhaps* even something that is beyond human finite understanding. None of these possibilities, presented with the vigilance contained in these various "perhaps," are foreclosed prior to our inquiry, and this entails an openness toward the world that oriented philosophical thinking at the beginning of Ancient Greek thinking. The stakes are quite high, if we are to believe Marcus Aurelius: "He who does not know what the world is [*ho ti esti kosmos*] does not know where he is. He who does not know the purpose of its existence knows neither who he is nor what the world is."[37] Even if we come to know, as Heidegger claims to know, that the world is without why or ground, that would still be an important (and surprising) step on the path to self-knowledge.

However, where does such a fallible and skeptical conclusion leave us regarding the stakes of the arguments for a reconciliation between nature and world that I outlined in the introduction to the book? It is all well to be *theoretically undecided* regarding the possibility of metaphysics, to be open toward both of the two possibilities that being is itself intelligible or that it is perhaps ultimately without ground or why, but that is of no help regarding the *practical* implications of the options opened up by Hegel and Heidegger. I suggested throughout that if we follow Hegel's or Heidegger's lines of argumentation we would end up at very different positions regarding the very task and possibility of philosophy, the healing of the divide between the natural sciences and the humanities, and the appropriate reorientation of our current technological relationship to nature. I do not pretend that this book offers a straightforward solution to these problems. At least half the battle is, I believe, becoming clear about the alternatives present within the tradition for dealing with them. What the stakes are, and that the stakes are high, should be clear by now, especially if Heidegger is correct that Enframing (*Gestell*) underwrites both our technological mastery of nature and the destitution of the human essence that are rampant in contemporary culture. But what practical implications one should draw from these texts is not altogether clear unless one has a well-defined sense of the exact relationship between theory and practice. In other words, one will not simply know whether we ought to engineer our way out of ecological disaster or turn to the resources of deep ecology merely by reading and rereading Hegel and Heidegger more deeply.

Both Hegel and Heidegger believe they have uncovered a domain that is deeper than the divide between theory and practice. For Hegel, the idea as negative self-relation is the movement and process at work in both our knowing relationship to the world and our practical attempts to be at home in such a world. For Heidegger, the groundless ground of metaphysics, the abyss that is evaded in each metaphysical principle that is erected, grounds our theoretical and practical concerns no less than the very metaphysical distinction between theory and practice. It is an extremely difficult issue, then, to see what the immediate practical implications may be for a domain that lies prior to any division between the theoretical and the practical. Becoming clear about the alternatives laid out upon this deeper layer behind theory and practice is at least a first step toward the question of how we ought to practically proceed, and this is what this book has set out to do. How these deeper layers relate directly to practical concerns requires a sustained engagement with the history and development of the distinction between theory and practice, and this will be the focus of a future book.

NOTES

1. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 432; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 69.
2. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 432; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 69.
3. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 432; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 69.
4. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 432; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 70.
5. Heidegger, "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in BW, 433; "Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens," in ZSD, 70–71.
6. Heidegger, N, 148; NII, 179.
7. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 89; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 74
8. Heidegger, N, 148; NII, 179.
9. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 95; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 81.
10. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 93; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 79.
11. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 95–96; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 81.
12. Heidegger, N, 149; NII, 179.
13. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 12; Jacques Derrida, *De la Grammatologie* (Paris: Les Éditions Minuit, 1967), 24.
14. Heidegger, N, 149; NII, 180.
15. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 33. Italics mine.
16. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 85; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 69.
17. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in EoP, 86; "Überwindung der Metaphysik," in VA, 70–71.
18. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, translated by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 265. Hereafter cited as *The Beast and the Sovereign*.
19. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign,* 266.
20. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign,* 267.
21. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign,* 268.
22. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign,* 266.
23. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign,* 266.
24. Heidegger, BF, 19; BFV, 20.
25. Heidegger, "The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics," in ID, 49; "Die onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik," in IuD, 58.
26. Hegel, PhS, 47; PhG, 69.

27. Hegel, PhS, 14; PhG, 28.
28. Hegel, PhS, 14; PhG, 29.
29. Hegel, PhS, 16; PhG, 32.
30. Hegel, PhS, 17; PhG, 34.
31. Hegel, PhS, 17–18; PhG, 34–35.
32. Hegel, PhS, 17; PhG, 34.
33. Hegel, PhS, 17; PhG, 34.
34. Hegel, EL, 217; EnL, 286–87.
35. Plato, *Republic*, in *The Republic of Plato*, translated by Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 165; Plato, *The Republic II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press University Press, 1935), 8 (486a).
36. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 270–71. *Akademieausgabe* 5: 400.
37. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, translated by Robin Hard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 80; Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, *Meditations*, translated by R. R. Haines, Loeb Classical Library 58 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 224. Translation amended to render *kosmos* as "world" rather than the Latinate "universe."

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